MENNONITE
Historical Bulletin

Vol. LVI January 1995 ISSN 0025-9357 No. 1

The Organizational Children of MCC

by Calvin Redekop

The role of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in the North American Mennonite enterprise in the 20th century (after 1920) is legendary. It was originally formed to provide emergency material and logistical assistance to fellow Mennonites during the Russian famine in the early 1920s. Unrelentingly, however, MCC expanded its goals and purposes from relief for the suffering and material assistance to ever expanding circles of material, emotional, social and public concerns, including a presence at federal government levels in Washington, D.C., and in Ottawa, Ont.

MCC has also given birth to a significant number of organizations paralleling its own ministry. It is difficult to identify definitively the specific organizations which have been created either directly or indirectly by MCC or by the ecumenical climate it has created, but my research suggests that at least 47 organizations have been formed—created by MCC-initiated efforts, by one or more Mennonite conferences, or formed by an inter-Mennonite clientele infused by the ecumenical spirit initiated by the spirit of MCC.

A profile of the emergence of MCC related organizations in 10-year periods indicates the movement from 1920 to the present:

Years	# Organ. Formed
1920-1929	3
1930-1939	1
1940-1949	15
1950-1959	11
1960-1969	4
1970-1979	10
1980-present	3
TOTAL	47

Orie O. Miller in conversation with Peter J. Dyck. credit: MCC Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

It appears that the 1940s and 1950s influenced the formation of numerous organizations reflecting the urgent consequence of the great disruptions of World War II; this spurt was followed by another in the 1970s, again a decade of change and growth in social and political activities both nationally and worldwide. Few studies exist which chart the emergence of organizations in the decades of this century, connecting them with both secular (external) and internal forces, but the emergence of organizations is impressive.

The basic assumption of this study is that the prolific formation of organizations during "the MCC period" results from the perception of urgent needs to be addressed, and from the discovery of the organization as a weapon for attacking problems; for as defined above, organizations are the most effective ways to articulate goals, set up the structures to achieve them, (including rules for positions to be filled) fill the positions with personnel, and secure the resources to

achieve the goals.

Several types of approaches to creating these organizations are discernable: (1) MCC-initiated organizations which retained some affiliation with MCC or were terminated—8 organizations; (2) organizations created by MCC but which became autonomous or semi-autonomous—5 organizations; (3) organizations created to support MCC activities—9 organizations; 4) organizations created by conferences to parallel MCC activities abroad and at home—9; (5) organizations resulting from MCC ethos for inter-Mennonite promotion of peace and service emphasis and created by MCC with conferences—16.

A classification of the organizations formed according to the purposes and goals reveals the following breakdown and provides further insights:

Purpose of Organ.	# of Organ.
1. Represent Mennonites to government	2
2. Assist MCC relief, refugee settlement and development abroad but also at home	16
3. Promote and conduct domestic inter-Mennonite peace and reconciliation for Mennonites and others	4
4. Promote and conduct domestic mutual aid and development programs for Mennonites and others	9
5. Conduct their own MCC-like programs	9
6. Promote inter-Mennonite cooperation and exchange programs abroad	7
TOTAL	47

Considering the types of goals and functions articulated, it is clear that most of the goals could best be served by a super-organization such as foreign relief, community development and similar activities, government representations such as Civilian Public Service (CPS), and National Service Board for Religious Objectors (NISBCO) and experimental programs. The self study reported on below affirms this position—that MCC "is to act as a unified voice for the Mennonite brotherhood" in matters of international relief and service, national and international peace witness, government contacts, etc. (MCC Self Study, Findings Committee Report, Nov. 2, 1973, p. 4).

Goals which could also be implemented by individual conferences (groups in numbers 4 and 5) have created considerable discussion and tension. In group 5, numerous organizations have been created separate from MCC, indicating the ambiguities of MCC's role in fulfilling the goals of the Mennonite community.

Other factors such as size and aggressiveness of the individual conferences have been influential in the emergence of some organizations. Hence, in 1917 the Mennonite Church already formed an international relief organization, but reined in its foreign activities when MCC was formed. Leadership factors undoubtedly also played a role in these dynamics, as illustrated by men such as Harold S. Bender and Orie Miller. Bender and Miller played important roles in the formation of MCC and other organizations in the Mennonite Church, such as the Voluntary Service program, which seemed to duplicate some aspects of MCC.

The major dynamic which undergirds the formation of new organizations by MCC and which determines what relationship they should have with MCC, for example whether they separate from or are formed parallel to the MCC by various conferences, is the issue of the goals and purposes of the program, balanced by the issue of jurisdictions and control of the goals and purposes of by conferences. The issue might be stated as a question: What rights and responsibilities does the MCC have in directing goal-achieving organizations where the conferences have special and vital interests and have the resources to launch their own programs?

It seems those goals which can be better achieved by individual conferences have been reserved or taken back, by conferences. Where unclarity still exists in domestic areas such as community and individual rehabilitation, inner-city micro-business development activities and Native ministries, or uncharted areas where experimentation is indicated, MCC-initiated organizations have continued to operate.

But the issue of theology and doctrine cannot be ignored. A major concern preoccupying conferences supporting MCC is the issue of theology and religious practice including nonconformity. The lifestyle and theology

The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Church Historical Association.

Editor: John E. Sharp; Review editor: Steven D. Reschly; Design: Julie Kauffman.

Dues for subscription-membership in the Mennonite Church Historical Association ($20 annual), inquiries, articles, or news items should be sent to the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526. Telephone 219 535-7477, fax 219 535-7660.

Microfilms of Volumes I-L of the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* are available from: University Microfilms, Inc., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

MCC Executive Committee, 1951. Back row (l-r): H. A. Fast, C. F. Klassen, H. S. Bender, C. N. Hostetler. Front row (l-r): O. O. Miller, P. C. Hiebert, J. J. Thiessen. credit: MCC Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

of MCC personnel has been of great concern, especially to the more conservative group; this helps explain some activities promoted by the conference organizations that seem to parallel and duplicate MCC-initiated ones.

The theological concern finds its expression in the controversy about "works" and "doing good" as a substitute for the proclamation of the gospel and salvation. One of the conclusions of the self-study conducted by MCC in 1972-73 states: "There is ... an awareness that as Mennonites there are some things we can best do together and some things we can best do locally or by individual conferences and agencies.... We are ambivalent at this point over the extent to which we want to carry out programs cooperatively or independently as conferences" (Findings Committee Report, p. 2-3). There is another perspective which has affected organizational development in MCC and its constituencies, namely the concern about over-bureaucratization versus grassroots representation, on the one hand, and the theological and philosophical concern about the role of organization in the conduct of religious life, on the other. The analysis of how MCC organizations have been used as "organizational weapons" to achieve the visions of individual church leaders still needs to be done.

The formation of organizations related to MCC hence presents us with a dynamic and dialectic process. Below are some of the givens which produced this dynamic and dialectic:

(1) the pluralism among Mennonite conferences regarding theological and lifestyle differences ranges from quite liberal to quite conservative /traditional Mennonites, including the fundamentalist/evangelical stance regarding material and social action. Hence, the nature of support, and the areas in which support is given, have varied greatly among conferences and created considerable discussion.

(2) The relative size of the conferences in terms of membership, resources, educational levels and existing institutional structures has affected conference dependence on MCC-sponsored organizations. For example, the Mennonite Church, with its considerable resources and organizational structure, was in a position to dictate more demands and to create organizations with such as Mennonite Relief and Service Committee (MRSC), which paralleled MCC, especially through the leaders who were involved in MCC; this was not evident in smaller conferences. Therefore, mutual aid organizations such as Mennonite Mutual Aid and the Mennonite Foundation were all basically initiated by the Mennonite Church.

(3) The growing perception of the needs existing in the larger world affected all conferences, but the responses varied greatly among the conferences regarding organizational formation. Thus the Russian Mennonite refugee experience played an urgent role among Russian Mennonites, whereas the CPS program during World War II affected the Swiss Mennonites more existentially than the Russian Mennonites. This had clear consequences regarding the support for specific organizations.

(4) Another dynamic already alluded to, is the overlapping in personnel between MCC and conference bodies and organizations and the personal qualities and status of the specific persons holding major positions. (This was especially pronounced in eastern U.S. and Canada.) Persons who exemplified this fact were foremost Orie O. Miller, Harold S. Bender, C. L. Graber, J. J. Thiessen, and B. B. Janz. The multiple-organization membership created increased power to initiate organizations, either supporting MCC goals and activities or paralleling and competing with them in various ways. An example would be Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA).

Two Case Studies

To provide illustrations of these issues, here follows a brief analysis of two organizations: Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) and the *Mennonitische Post*.

Mennonite Disaster Service

In many ways MDS is the quintessential expression of the MCC ethos and of how organizations are formed in which MCC played a unique role. MDS is an inter-Mennonite action which emerged out of the desire to serve "in the name of Christ" and is a grassroots organization. The idea was born in

> "a young married couples' Sunday school picnic in the summer of 1950. The young couples of the Pennsylvania Mennonite Church and Hesston College Church had gathered for joint fellowship. In the course of the gathering, a concern was raised about the practical outworking of a concern for their neighbors." (114, Dyck, C. J., Kreider,

Roberts, and Lapp, John A., *Witness and Service in North America: The Mennonite Central Committee Story*, vol. 3:1980)

A committee was formed and a statement was sent to MCC and the South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church reflecting the group's interest in serving. It did not take long for an opportunity to serve to materialize. The heavy rains in Kansas in 1951 created serious flooding in Wichita, Kansas, and a call for volunteers came. The committee sent volunteers and appointed a director of the new organization. Mennonite congregations in the areas from the General Conference and the Holdeman Church were enlisted to help, and Mennonite Disaster Service was born.

In the meantime, officials at Topeka also asked for flood assistance; so the local organization approached MCC for help in augmenting the Topeka action. A second organization was formed in northern Indiana and western Ohio in 1953 in response to a tornado in Flint, Michigan. "As the idea spread, other local MDS organizations were formed, usually inter-Mennonite in character. The need for larger co-ordination and counsel led to a request by several conferences for co-ordination on a national basis" (*Mennonite Encyclopedia*, 3:620). A formal appeal to MCC for assistance in organizing the movement was sent to the MCC executive committee in 1952.

At first the MCC executive did not respond directly and maintained an advisory role for several years (Dyck, 116). In March 1955, the executive committee replied that "in view of the growing interest and importance of the disaster service work, we agreed to recommend to the MCC Executive Committee that ... for the purposes of coordination of the work among these local groups.... MCC should provide a coordination committee composed of a member of the Akron staff and representatives to be designated by their respective constituent groups" (Dyck, Kreider and Lapp, 116).

Organizational guidelines were established and articulated in the same memorandum. There was, however, considerable discussion and

MDS workers in Oklahoma, 1955. John Frey, Verne Gering, William Gingerich, Nelson Kreider, Wilmer Wedel. credit: MCC Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

concern regarding the spontaneous and grassroots nature of the movement. Harry Martens, in reflections on the formation of MDS in 1978, noted a major concern: How to relate to MCC Akron "we want to be grassroots organization" (Dyck, Kreider and Lapp, 119). Thus "after much debate, and in spite of the fears of loss of autonomy on the part of some local MDS groups, the regional groups appointed representatives to a national coordination committee under the auspices of MCC" (Dyck, Kreider and Lapp, 117-118).

MCC subsequently appointed the Disaster Service Co-ordinating Committee which took responsibility for liaison with the U.S. Civil Defense and other national agencies. Representatives of the Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church, Evangelical Mennonite Church, Conservative (Amish) Mennonite, and Brethren in Christ were appointed. By 1957, regional service units had been organized in 18 areas of the United States and Canada (*ME*, 3:620). The organization has had phenomenal support and growth. At present there are 60 units across Canada and the United States. "The program is decentralized with local units springing into action as needs arise. In larger disasters, the regional and binational organizations provide support and personnel for the local units" (ME, 5:238).

The major thrust of MDS continues to be responding to natural disasters, cleanup and repairs, However, "MDS personnel are willing to expand their areas of involvement where there is a need and volunteers are available.... MDS has assisted in repairing homes in urban or rural low-income areas, participated in remodeling churches, and assisted Mennonite Central Committee in its relief efforts" (*ME*, 5:238). Thus, with time, the definition of disaster has expanded "to include the chronic as well as the acute crisis, destruction caused not only by nature, but also by acts of man (Wiebe, Katie Funk, *Day of Disaster*, 1976, 102). It includes aiding Head Start programs, caring for disadvantaged children, inner-city rehabilitation, etc.

At present the organizational structure is singularly ambiguous: MDS "remains a binational organization. Representation on the section (board) comes from the four regions in the United States and one in Canada, from nine participating conference bodies, and from the supporting Mennonite Central Committee, Canada and Mennonite Central Committee U.S. organizations" (*ME* 5:237). There is an executive coordinator located at Akron, Pa,. with an executive composed of seven representatives of a number of Mennonite Organizations. The organization and its work is divided into five regions, each with a director.

There is no question that the nature of the goals, the location of the needs to be served and the history of

Einen andern Grund kann niemand legen auszer dem, der gelegt ist, welcher ist Jesus Christus.
1. Korinther 3:11

Canada Post Postage paid / Postes Canada Port payé
35 Bulk third class / En nombre troisième classe
STEINBACH

DIE MENNONITISCHE
Post

Nummer 1 Donnerstag, den 21. April 1977 Jahrgang 1

The first issue of Die Mennonitische Post, April 21, 1977. Note the 1 Corinthians 3:11 motto. credit: Dennis Stoesz.

the personnel (mostly former MCC workers) indicate the tension between a centralized management structure and local emphases. The goals of service to neighbors and fellow humans regardless of location, creed or race the notion of the importance of material and social assistance the notion of operating within the inter-Mennonite ecumenical framework clearly reflect the influence of the "MCC ethos" as well as the dependence on MCC to achieve the goals themselves. The MCC ethos is thus cause and effect, both the instigator and the result of the commitment to serve.

Die Mennonitische Post

An organization with an extremely different origin and structure publishes the *Mennonitische Post*, a periodical which is now attempting to help guide a Mennonite population which is floundering socially, culturally and religiously. Conservative Kanadier Mennonites, intentionally turned away from progress and "the world" and moved to Mexico and other Latin American countries, beginning in 1925. This migration set in motion forces which produced a society with very high illiteracy rates, family violence, alcoholism, poverty, conflict, and loss of religious identity.

Because of the extremely high birth rates, one of the highest in the world, these Mennonites have produced a population of almost 100,000; their lack of organization is threatening to become a major disaster. What can and should be done? What responsibility do other Mennonites have for this state of affairs?

Various persons working among the Old Colony in Mexico, Bolivia, Belize, and elsewhere as well as Mennonite leaders in Canada and the United States were aware of the deterioration of the Old Colony people in all the new settlements, and wanted to assist them. These concerned people worked for formation of a committee to oversee these concerns. In 1977 the Kanadier Colonization Committee (KCC) was formed by MCC. This committee supported the idea of the reconstitution of the *Steinbach Post* paper with a more conscious effort to help and serve the Old Colony community.

The *Steinbach Post*, began in 1913 and was published until 1966. Many Old Colonists subscribed to it, and it made an impact on them. But because the *Post* depended on advertising, the paper had to terminate since the Old Colonists did not advertise. Upon its formation, the Kanadier Colonization Committee immediately advised that MCC Canada support the publication of the *Die Mennonitische Post*.

The newly redesigned paper "includes Bible verses, inspirational articles, news from community correspondents, and special pages for children. But it is best known for publishing letters from its readers which serve both as family newsletter and community bulletin board" (Kreider and Waltner-Goossen). Disagreements and conflicts regarding the purposes and consequences of the *Post* are evident, since the Old Colony leadership is suspicious about the intents of the publishers and the impact on the membership.

The public intents of the paper and the covert intents are obviously different. In May 1992 a report entitled "Projections for MCC Canada Kanadier Work in Mexico" to the MCC Canada Board Executive. In that report Abe Warkentin states that "though the leaders did not (and could not) give the *Post* `official approval' many were consulted prior to beginning publication. Perhaps this helped avoid direct opposition as well" (Report 3). Then follows an analysis of what is needed to alleviate the problems in the conservative Mennonite colonies. Problems listed include the conservative stance of the leadership, the loss of credibility by the leadership, weakening of moral fiber, lack of new ideas, inadequate education, land shortages and high birth rates (Report, 3-5). There is no question that this analysis is correct, but attempting to help a "morally wounded" sister Mennonite group with a similar background is a very delicate task. As Warkentin states, "The conservative Mennonite leaders have always objected to the presence of North American mission and service agencies who have sought to win converts and provide improved health and social service" (Report 7).

These two case studies of organizations formed by MCC are only illustrate the vast variety of organizations which MCC has helped create and support, the variety of concerns and goals these organizations have espoused, the varying dynamics that brought these organizations into existence, and the way they are structured and maintained.

Concluding Analysis

This necessarily brief and selective review of the organizations which emerged in the time frame of the birth and life of MCC provides us with significant material to reach some important conclusions. These conclusions are not of equal importance, nor do they exhaust the list,

but we hope they will help us understand what has been happening and assess its import.

1. First, it is clear that the years from 1920 to 1980 have been the decades of organizing for action. This does not imply that no organizations were formed before 1920. Referring to the period around the turn of the century (1900-1910), James Juhnke quotes Menno S. Steiner as saying, "We are now in the organization period of our church life" (*Vision, Doctrine, War*, 1989, 120). But I believe the organizational formation dealt largely with the ordering of the inner life of the conferences themselves.

It appears certain that the pace of organizational formation increased during the years since MCC was formed. This pace implies that the Mennonite society was beginning to become aware of its responsibilities to the larger world and assumed that organizations, illustrated by the success of MCC, were the best channel to do it. *THE ERA OF GREATER DEPENDENCE UPON ORGANIZATIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS OF THE MENNONITE SOCIETY HAD COME.*

This new mood was not arrived at in a vacuum, for the organizational culture had long existed in the larger society. DeTocqueville remarked as early as 1820 "In no country in the world has the principle of association [organizations] been more successfully used ... than in America" (Williams, Robin M., Jr., *American Society*, 1955, 466). Sociologist Williams states, "There is an enormous proliferation of formally organized special-interest associations of the most diverse kinds [in America]" (462). Mennonites had adopted a prevailing custom.

2. MCC as an inter-Mennonite organization continues to provide the context and resources for inter-Mennonite issues and concerns and those beyond the Mennonite confines, and for new experimental objectives, which could not possibly be initiated by any conference itself. The two case studies discussed above and almost all the organizations created reflect the fact that a super-structure such as MCC was necessary for the coordination and pooling of efforts for the achievement of the various goals.

MDS followed this flood near Yuba City, California, in December 1955. One farmer lost 450 head of cattle. Three carcasses lie on the road. In the background orchard trees were uprooted. credit: MCC Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

3. The greatest areas of ambiguity and tension between MCC and the supporting conferences regarding the organizations which have MCC connections are those in which the objectives and activities impinge on the evangelical and doctrinal stances of the various conferences. Hence, voluntary service organizations were created by most conferences because of the suspicion that MCC was not evangelical enough or did not stress certain doctrines enough. And in some conferences, foreign relief organizations formed were more directly tied to the conference mission programs.

4. The relative longevity of the organizations attests to the congruity between the goals and achievements. That is to say, the majority of organizations have survived, and have proven to be effective channels by which members and conferences have put their faith into practice. Very few of the organizations formed between 1920 and the present have been discontinued, although a number have changed their purposes and structures. When an organization was terminated or separated from MCC, it was usually due to the disappearance of the needs, a more efficient operation under auspices independent of MCC, or the fear of doctrinal compromise. The CPS program would illustrate the first, Menno Travel Service the second, and conference VS programs the latter.

5. The institutionalization and bureaucratization processes assumed to be inherent in organizations seem to be modest in MCC-related organizations because of the Mennonite ethos emphasizing hard work, honesty, stewardship and community discipline. Little evidence exists that organizations affiliated with MCC have exceptionally high overhead, waste resources, exhibit mismanagement or exploit organizational privileges for personal gain. This does however not imply that none of the above have been present.

For a religious tradition which stresses the centrality of the congregation in its religious and community life, the reality of national and international organizations seems curious. The question of whether congregationalism and organization formation is fully compatible needs further study.

Cal Redekop, Harrisonburg, Va., is retired professor of sociology who taught at Conrad Grebel, Tabor and Goshen Colleges.

Schema of the Organizational Children of MCC

by Calvin Redekop

DATE	NAME	PURPOSE
I. MCC initiated organizations which retained some organic relationship with MCC and/or were later terminated.		
1. 1940	National Service Board for Religious Objectors (NISBCO)	Represent conscientious objectors in Wash., D.C.
2. 1941	Civilian Public Service	Conduct alternative service program for Mennonite conferences.
3. 1942	Mennonite Relief Committee of India	Serve refugees coming to India.
4. 1946	SELFHELP	Provide employment in underdeveloped countries.
5. 1946	Mennonite Resettlement Finance Committee	Trustee for funds received to assist refugee settlement.
6. 1961	Teachers Abroad Program	Provide opportunities for professionals to serve.
7. 1971	Women's Concerns	Promote women's issues and concerns.
8. 1975	Mennonite Conciliation Service	Mediate interpersonal and inter-group conflicts.
II. Organizations created by MCC but later spun off to become semi-autonomous or fully autonomous.		
9. 1947	Menno Travel Service	Make travel arrangements for MCC and other church-related service workers.
10. 1947	Mennonite Mental Health Services	Operate mental hospitals begun by MCC and CPS experiences.
11. 1950	Mennonitischer Freiwiligen Dienst	Reconstruction after WW II with European youth.
12. 1952	Mennonite Economic Development Associates	Assist development of Mennonite settlers in Paraguay.
13. 1955	Association of Mennonite Aid Societies	Foster mutual aid and serve as clearing house.
14. 1976	Canadian Food Bank	Collect grains for MCC assistance abroad.
III. Conference(s) and lay organizations created to support MCC activities.		
15. 1917	Mennonite Relief Commission for War Sufferers (MC)	Pre-MCC program to serve war victims; after 1926 cooperated with MCC.
16. 1920	Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization	Coordinate relief efforts in Canada, similar to # 14.
17. 1924	Mennonite Land Settlement Board (inter-Mennonite)	Take over land settlement from Can. Menn. Board of Colonization.
18. 1933	Emergency Relief Board (U.S. GC Mennonites)	Cooperate with MCC in its various ministries.
19. 1940	Canadian Mennonite Relief Committee	Give peace witness and funnel relief services through MCC.
20. 1957	Mennonite Relief Sales	Raise financial support for all MCC activities foreign and domestic.
21. 1969	Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus	Raise support for MCC programs.
22. 1972	Thrift Shops	Assist local poor and support MCC activities.
23. 1977	West Coast Mennonite Men's Chorus	Raise support for MCC programs.

IV. Organizations created by conferences to parallel MCC activities abroad and at home.		
24. 1943	Voluntary Service (MC)	Provide alternative to war service.
25. 1946	Voluntary Service (GC)	Provide alternative to war service.
26. 1948?	Christian Disaster Relief (Holdeman Menn.)	"Work for material and spiritual welfare of our fellow men."
27. 1950	Voluntary Service (Conservative Conf, MC)	"Service and outreach for conference."
28. 1950	Board of Christian Service (GC Mennonites)	Conduct conference relief, peace and material aid work.
29. 1951?	Board of Benevolence (BIC)	Promote material, moral and spiritual aid to needy people.
30. 1955	Amish Mennonite Relief (Beachy Amish)	Assist overseas mission work.
31. 1958	Christian Foreign Welfare Committee (Holdeman Mennonite)	Connect spiritual witness to material welfare.
32. 1960	Voluntary Service (MB)	"Express Christian discipleship and serve needy world."

V. Organizations resulting from the "MCC Ethos" of inter-Mennonite promotion of peace and service emphases and created by MCC with conferences.		
33. 1946	Student Exchange Program	Promote inter-Mennonite international understanding.
34. 1947	Mennonite Mutual Aid	Assist in sharing of financial burdens (originally CPS men).
35. 1948	Mennonite World Conference	To bring world Mennonites into closer fellowship.
36. 1949	Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship	Promote peace education and service.
37. 1950	International Visitor Exchange Program	Cultural exchange and professional development.
38. 1952	Mennonite Disaster Service	Provide mutual aid in natural disasters.
39. 1957	Mennonite Indemnity	Reinsure local North American mutual insurance companies.
40. 1970	Mission Training Center	Coordinate mission training.
41. 1974	Mennonite Developmental Disabilities Service	To create awareness and opportunities for disabled persons.
42. 1974	Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program	Victim-offender opportunities to meet and work toward reconciliation.
43. 1976	*Die Mennonitische Post*	"Link Canadian Mennonites with South American Brethren."
44. 1977	Mennonite Your Way	Promote fellowship among Anabaptists.
45. 1987	Council of USSR Ministries	Coordinating body for fraternal relations with Christians in USSR.
46. 1987	Seniors for Peace	Utilize seniors in peace promotion.
47. 1989	Environmental Task Force	Promote environmental awareness and conservation.

Community, Place and Peoplehood in New York

By Kimberly D. Schmidt

Strangers and Pilgrims: History of Lewis County Mennonites, Arlene R. Yousey. Sold privately by Randy Widrick, R 1, Box 66, Colton NY 13625. 1987, reprinted in 1994, pp. 511. $45.00.

I first visited Lewis County in 1988 to determine the feasibility of conducting a community study for a Ph.D. dissertation in history. Arlene Yousey was the resident historian, having privately published a volume on the history of local Mennonites a year earlier, which is now in its second printing. My contact with Lewis County Mennonites has been sustained through several visits, phone calls and interviews.

This winter, two Lewis County Mennonite women and I will present papers on Mennonite women's changing work responsibilities during the 1980s farm crisis at the Fifth Symposium on Rural/Farm Women's History. This review of Yousey's book, therefore, is not impartial or strictly academic. Rather, the review is informed by my personal relationship with the people of Lewis County and by my ongoing interest in Arlene Yousey's dedication to local history.

Yousey can trace her family roots back to one of the founding families of the Conservative Mennonite Church of Croghan, New York, the most historically significant church in Lewis County. Carrying on a tradition in her family, she began jotting down conversations and keeping a diary at a young age. During an interview Yousey said she was asked to write the local history of the Lewis County Mennonites because no one else wanted the job. Her journal, along with journals, records and diary entries from other family members, formed the starting point for her historical investigation of the Amish and Mennonite experience in Lewis County.

Lewis County sits on the western edge of the Adirondack Mountains.

Arlene R. Yousey wrote the history of the Amish Mennonites in Lewis County, New York. "By centering much of her analysis and anecdotes on family life, Yousey supports her argument that the religiously based community ethic of family togetherness sustained them through hardships such as church schisms and lean economic times."

As you travel north along highway 88 to Syracuse, you will see small streams turn into rushing rivers and stands of fir trees overtake the deciduous forest that covers southern New York. The land has maintained elements of wilderness; farmers still battle beavers whose dams flood their fields. The growing season is short, 90 days in a good year. The northern climate and rocky hillsides had an impact on Mennonite history in Lewis County, especially in the early years when the struggle to settle the land and establish a church-based community was intense.

From Yousey we learn that Mennonite and Amish church history in Lewis County started with the arrival of the Michael and Anna Zehr family in 1833. Michael was a miller from the Alsace-Lorraine region in France. Chief among the reasons to emigrate was the threat of military conscription of his two oldest sons, ages 19 and 16. Almost penniless, the family, totaling two adults and nine children, landed in New York City and made their way to the small hamlet of Croghan in Lewis County, New York, "carrying little more than their talents, traditions and, most importantly, their faith as their gift to this country" (Yousey, page 14).

Oral traditions of other pioneer families echo those of the Zehrs. Stories about pioneers tend to emphasize the harsh weather conditions, extreme poverty and hard work. In spite of the hardships, at least 24 Mennonite and Amish families from regions in France and Switzerland joined the Zehrs along with additional families from Pennsylvania and Ontario. After enduring years of economic persecution in Europe, the Amish and Mennonites who settled Lewis County, New York, saw in the United States a chance to create cohesive, economically stable environments where they could practice their religion in peace.

In classic chain-migration fashion, they often made the journey alone or in small family groups. Male members of families, such as fathers and older brothers, came first and worked as day laborers, farm hands and lumbermen until they could afford to send for other family members. Those who followed the Zehrs to Lewis County were able to recreate their European village patterns by building farms within walking distance, usually less than a mile or two of one another.

Although Yousey does not write with a feminist agenda, her attention to family life includes the contributions of women and children to Lewis County's economic base. The early agricultural practices of Mennonites supported self-sustaining family farms wherein men and women worked together on a number of tasks. Men tilled small plots of tobacco for sale and home consumption. From the American Indians, the early settlers learned how to boil sap into maple syrup. This practice plus hunting and fishing and harvesting natural resources from the surrounding forests, such as lumber, pelts, and berries, provided food for the table and added income on a seasonal basis.

Although men did most of the

hunting and fishing, Yousey's sources cite women and children collecting sap from maple trees, gathering berries and taking care of livestock such as sheep, cows and pigs. Yousey records that both men and women worked in the fields and farmyard. Lewis County Mennonites maintained their traditions of living off the land and working together on small family-owned farms well into the 20th century. Their strong religious beliefs and isolated location in upstate New York may account for their ability to resist assimilationist impulses.

Yousey's book seems to have something for everyone. The information on family names and their European origins is useful to the work of genealogists, as is a section on family lineage. Local residents will find concise and useful information about early immigration and settlement patterns, agricultural practices and the importance of family and community life. Archivists and historians will value Yousey's wide range of sources which include local agricultural census reports, 19th- and early 20th-century letters, diary entries which detail work and community life, maps, pictures, newspaper articles, church documents and the aforementioned family papers.

There is much to appreciate about Yousey's contribution. Yousey's purpose in her writing was to record history in as straightforward a manner as possible. She leaves interpretive questions to others.

Yousey looks beyond the "male leadership" version of church history. Included in her story are accounts of women's work (for example, a diary from a Croghan woman in 1889 shows her busy with clothing production, helping neighbors and entertaining guests), farm work and simple family entertainments such as knitting together (men and women) on cold winter evenings, or extended families working together during sugaring season.

By centering much of her analysis and anecdotes of Lewis County Amish and Mennonites on family life, Yousey supports her argument that the religiously-based community ethic of family togetherness sustained them through hardships such as church schisms and lean economic times.

Yousey deftly avoids the trap of portraying local history as the "Golden Age of Mennonite History," that is, overlooking painful episodes in church history. Lewis County church history, like many other Mennonite groups, was marked with schisms. The Croghan church underwent two; the first one in 1857 almost rendered the church nonexistent.

Some controversy over the causes of the second schism, in 1941, still exists. The official reason for the split was some elected male leaders were reluctant to wear the plain coat. By placing the conflict within the context of earlier disputes over women's dress, Yousey hints that perhaps the dress question was long-standing and that women also contributed to the tensions. In her descriptions, Yousey does not minimize the bitterness left in the wake of the conflicts. Rather, she writes about how it took many years for community members to recover from the schisms' economic and emotional wounds.

Yousey's work has had numerous positive effects in the county. She sparked an interest in local history and the preservation of church and family papers, some of which are held in the archives at the Conservative Mennonite Church in Croghan.

Another less tangible benefit stems from a core reason for the writing of history. Yousey's history has helped Lewis County Mennonites to define themselves. After reading the book, one is left with a strong sense of community, place and peoplehood. Yousey's book is a significant contribution to the practice of local church history and to the historian's understanding of the Mennonite experience in North America.

Kimberly D. Schmidt of Arlington, Virginia, is completing her doctorate at State University of New York at Binghamton. She is a member of the Mennonite Church Historical Committee.

History Keeping in the Shenandoah Valley

by Randy Shank

The history of the Mennonite Church in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia is one that reaches back into the early 1700s, when Mennonites came south from Pennsylvania looking for ample farmland on which to raise their large families. Most migrated after living for some time in the Lancaster and Franklin County areas of Pennsylvania.

Though the earliest settlements in present-day Page and Shenandoah Counties did not survive as Mennonite, there were later settlements in Rockingham and Augusta Counties that formed the nucleus of the Mennonite Church in Virginia.

Presently there are five main groups of Mennonites and Amish in central Shenandoah Valley. These are located from Stephens City near Winchester in the north, to Christiansburg just south of Roanoke, on the south.

The largest group of churches forms a portion of Virginia Mennonite Conference. Other congregations, including several of the earliest ones, belong to the Southeastern Conference, an independent Mennonite body. There are also congregations that belong to the Beachy Amish and Old Order Amish in Augusta County. Just west and south of Harrisonburg near Dayton is a sizable settlement of Old Order Mennonites. There are also several independent churches which consider themselves to be Mennonite.

In large part, the early historical efforts of the Mennonites in the Shenandoah Valley were carried out by the faculty of Eastern Mennonite College (now EMU). Harry Brunk, a professor of history, wrote the two-volume History of the Mennonites in Virginia in 1959. He also compiled several genealogies of families whose roots are in Virginia, with branches

This is the school in Bridgewater, Virginia, where John S. Coffman (1848-1899) trained to become a teacher. credit: John S. Coffman Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

Elizabeth Heatwole Coffman (1845-1919) was born in Rockingham County, Virginia, where she "was an eyewitness to the ravages of the civil war in the devastation of the beautiful Shenandoah Valley by contending armies." She married John S. Coffman in 1869, and moved to Elkhart with her family in 1879. credit: John S. Coffman Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

throughout the States and the world. Grace Showalter supervised the Menno Simons Library and Archives at EMC for many years

The Virginia Mennonite Conference has a Historical Committee. Headed by James O. Lehman, one of its main duties is to aid the local congregations in their understanding of the past. This includes such things as helping to organize congregational history celebrations, identifying and attempting to obtain local Mennonite documents which are of historic value, and suggesting possible research projects for individuals or groups.

The impetus to begin a new historical organization in the Shenandoah Valley came from this committee. In the fall of 1992, following a breakfast meeting, a planning group was formed to launch what has become the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians. With a present membership of about 135 persons, this society has just finished its first full year. Activities have included a historical tour, a newsletter and an annual breakfast meeting. Membership, which includes the quarterly newsletter, is open to everyone by writing to Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians, 780 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

The Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives is located in the Eastern Mennonite University Library building. The archives is located on the basement level of the library and houses the collections of both the Menno Simons Library and the Virginia Mennonite Conference. Although most of the collection is comprised of papers and writings of local Mennonite interest, there are also some artifacts of historical significance.

The Menno Simons Library is located on the second floor of the EMU Library. Here the researcher will find books and periodicals on Mennonite, Amish and Anabaptist history. These include genealogical sources such as atlases, regional and congregational histories, cemetery records, census and church records and individual family files.

The library is ably staffed by Lois Bowman and Harold Huber and is open from 10:00-12:00 and 1:00-5:00, Monday through Friday. Saturday hours are 10:00-1:00. (Tel. 703 432-4178)

Many of the congregations, especially the older ones, have either a congregational historian or a historical committee. These committees may suggest special programs, keep the cemetery and church records up-to-date and supply the archives with necessary documents as requested.

Lloyd Horst, as the historical secretary of the Southeastern Conference, keeps the records of this group of Mennonites.

There are a few private collections of note, such as Raymond Brunk's 225 tapes of Brunk Revival messages. Most of those are in the hands of family members and are not accessible at this time. It is our hope that many of these collections will find their way into the Archives at some time in the future.

Randy Shank, Broadway, Va., is a farmer and edits the ***Shenandoah Mennonite Historian****.*

Archives of the Mennonite Church

By Dennis Stoesz

What follows is a sampling of personal papers and organizational records that have come into the archives during the last six months of 1994. They are listed alphabetically by the name of the collection.

Brenneman, Henry, 1791-1866. Papers, 1821-1874, including land deeds, tax receipts, account books, business letters, and a diary by Brenneman who settled in Perry and Fairfield Counties, Ohio, in the 1820s. This collection also includes correspondence from the 1850s and 1860s of his son, Henry B. Brenneman (1834-1919), who promoted Sunday schools. Materials were all part of the Brenneman Box handed down through the family. 20 linear inches. Donors: Floyd E. Mumaw, Harvey D. Mumaw and Walter Mumaw.

Erb, Elizabeth, 1918-1993. Papers, 1936-94, including correspondence for these years; journals 1952-84; writings; photographs; and a biography of Erb written by a colleague, Elizabeth Penner, 1994. Elizabeth Erb was born in Lancaster area, Pennsylvania, received her nurse's training at Reading Hospital, Reading, Pennsylvania, 1936-39, and at Eastern Mennonite College where she graduated in 1946. She then served as a nurse educator at the Christian Hospital at Dhamtari, Central Provinces, India, under Mennonite Board of Missions from 1947-71. She retired at Landis Homes, Lititz, Pennsylvania. 10 linear inches. Donor: Mary Alice (Erb) Champ, Hegins, Pennsylvania, on behalf of the family.

Gingerich, Verna (Roth), 1902-. Papers, 1909-92, consisting of her diary of her trip out west, 1909; an autobiography, 1982; diaries, 1930-1993; account books, 1925-88; family histories of Roth, Gingerich and Wyse; and photographs. 15 linear inches. Donor: Verna Gingerich, Goshen, Indiana.

Goshen College, Information Services. Photographs, 1958-74, of the programs and activities of Goshen College. These photographs were taken by Mervin Zook, and have been organized and filed by subject headings, A-Z. File titles include "Alumni, Campus Shots, Festival of the Holy Spirit, Koinonia Groups, Nursing School, Seminary and Women's Athletics." 10 linear feet. Donor: John D. Yoder, Information Services.

Goshen College, Young People's Christian Association. Records, 1898-1955, consisting of minutes and reports of this association, and its many sub-committees, Bible Study, Church Relations, Devotional Committee, Extension Committee, and Social Committees. This association separated into a Young Men's Christian Association and a Young Women's Christian Association from 1906-48. Several of the Mennonite churches in the Elkhart County can trace their roots to the efforts of these young people who held Sunday schools and worship services in various areas. 3 linear feet. Donor: Mardene Kelley, Business Manager.

Indiana Mennonite Women's Missionary Rally. Records, 1937-89, consisting of minutes, programs and membership lists of this inter-Mennonite women's organization that holds missionary rallies in October of every year at a local church. Participating congregations come

Children of Missionaries in Calcutta, India, 1923. Front row (left-right): Edward Friesen, Anabelle Troyer, Ernest Smucker, Nellie Esch, Barbara Esch, Dana Troyer, Nortell Troyer, Mary Esch, Katherine Kaufman, Harriet Lapp. Back row (l-r): John Friesen, William Friesen, Lois Lapp holding Paul Friesen, Russel Kaufman holding Art Smucker, David Esch holding Helen Esch, Sarah Esch holding Thelma Miller, and Paul Kaufman. Ralph R. Smucker Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

from the Evangelical Mennonite Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. It was first known as the Union Missionary Society of the Mennonites of Indiana, and held its first meeting at Topeka Mennonite Church, Topeka, Indiana. 5 linear inches. Donor: Pat Yoder, Secretary, Goshen, Indiana.

Litwiller, Nelson, 1898-1987. Papers, 1940-86, including family history research; an autobiography, 1986; correspondence; and a photograph album from the time Litwiller served in Uruguay, circa 1940. 2.5 linear feet. Donor: Lois (Litwiller) Buckwalter, Goshen, Indiana.

Martins Mennonite Church, 1834- , Orrville, Ohio. Records, 1979-94, consisting of church bulletins, annual reports, newsletters, council minutes, a church directory and a constitution. Also includes dedication programs for 1950 and 1976, and the celebration materials produced for the 150th anniversary of the church in 1984, including the history book *Fruits of Diversity*. 10 linear inches. Donor: Becky Oyer, Church Historian.

Mennonite Economic Development Associates, 1954- , Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Records, 1982-84, of the work administered by the MEDA office in Pennsylvania. These files reflect the activities of the many local chapters in USA and the programs carried out in Bangladesh, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Germany, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Paraguay, Philippines, Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela and Zaire. 15 linear inches. Donor: Janelle Guntz, Office Manager.

Smucker, Ralph R., 1894-1975, and Alma A. (Albrecht) (d. 1944). Photographs, 1908-1958, of when the Smuckers served in India, 1920-36, with Mennonite Board of Missions. Some photographs are of Alma Albrecht before her marriage in 1914. 10 linear inches. Donor: Oma (Hershberger) Smucker (Mrs. Art Smucker).

Mennonite and Related Church Historians and Committees

This directory lists North American Mennonite, Amish and related historical committees, societies, conference historians, and interpretation centers. *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* publishes this list annually and would appreciate any updates or corrections from our readers.

Allegheny Conference Historical Committee, John E. Sharp, Mennonite Church of Scottdale, Scottdale PA 15683 412 887-7470

Atlantic Coast Conference Historian, Margaret Derstine, 2001 Harrisburg Pike, Lancaster PA 17601 717 687-8259

Brethren in Christ Church, E. Morris Sider, Archives of Brethren in Christ Church, Messiah College, Grantham PA 17027 717 691-6048

California Mennonite Historical Society, Peter J. Klassen, 4824 East Butler, Fresno CA 93727 209 453-2225

Casselman River Area Amish and Mennonite Historians, Kenneth L. Yoder, Box 591, Grantsville MD 21536 301 895-5687

Central District Conference Historical Committee, William Keeney, 140 North Lawn Avenue, Bluffton OH 45817 419 358- 6017

Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, Henry D. Goerzen, R 1, Didsbury AB T0M 0W0 403 335-8414

Conference of Mennonites in Canada History and Archives Committee, Lawrence Klippenstein, Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftsbury Blvd., Winnipeg MB R3P 0M4 204 888-6781

Conservative Mennonite Conference Historical Committee, Elmer S. Yoder, 3511 Edison Street, Hartville OH 44632 216 877-9566

Delaware Mennonite Historical Association, John J. Yoder, Box 238, Greenwood DE 19950

Essex-Kent Mennonite Historical Association, 31 Pickwick Drive, Leamington; mailing address: Harold Thiessen, Route 4, Leamington ON N8H 3V7

General Conference Mennonite Church, John Thiesen, Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton KS 67117 316 283-2500

Germantown Mennonite Church Corporation (1770 Meetinghouse, Rittenhouse Homestead, Johnson House), Galen R. Horst, 6133 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19144 215 843-0943

Hans Herr House Museum, Martin A. Franke, 1849 Hans Herr Dr. Willow Street PA 17584 717 464-4438

Heritage Historical Library, David Luthy, Route 4, Aylmer, ON Canada N5H 2R3

Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society and **Illinois Conference Historian**, Edwin J. Stalter, Mennonite Heritage Center, Box 819, Metamora IL 61548 309 367-2551 or 815 796-2918

Indiana-Michigan Conference Historian, Russell Krabill, 26221 Vista Lane, Elkhart IN 46517 219 522-6869

Juniata Mennonite Historical Society, Noah L. Zimmerman, The Historical Center, HCR 63, Richfield PA 17086 717 694-3543

Kidron Community Historical Society, Wayne Liechty, Box 14, Kidron OH 44636 216 857-3375

Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, Carolyn Charles Wenger, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster PA 17602 717 393-9745

Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, Lawrence Klippenstein, 484 Berkley Street, Winnipeg MB R3R 1J9 204 888-6718

The Meetingplace, Curtis Brubaker, 33 King Street, St. Jacobs Ontario N0B 2N0 519 664-3518

Menno-Hof, Tim Lichti, Box 701, Shipshewana IN 46565 219 768-4117

Menno Simons Library and Archives, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg VA 22801 703 432-4000

Mennonite Archival Centre, Hugo Friesen, Columbia Bible College, 2940 Clearbrook Road, Clearbrook BC V2T 2Z8 604 853-3358

Mennonite Archives of Ontario,

Samuel Steiner, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo Ontario N2L 3G6 519 885-0220, ext. 238

Mennonite Brethren Churches (Canada) Historical Committee, Abe Dueck, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 169 Riverton Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E5 204 669-6575

Mennonite Brethren Conference (North American) Historical Commission, Paul Toews, Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 4824 East Butler, Fresno CA 93727 209 453-2225

Mennonite Brethren Church (USA), Peggy Goertzen, Center for MB Studies, Tabor College, Hillsboro KS 67063 316 947-3121

Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, Vera Martin, R 2, West Montrose ON N0B 2V0 519 669-5379

Mennonite Church Historical Association, Historical Committee and Archives of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen IN 46526 219 535-7477

Mennonite Historical Association of the Cumberland Valley, Roy M. Showalter, Box 335, State Line PA 17263 301 733-2184

Mennonite Historical Library, Ann Hilty, Bluffton College, Bluffton OH 45817 419 358-3365

Mennonite Historical Library, John D. Roth, Goshen College, 1700 South Main, Goshen IN 46526 219 535-7418

Mennonite Historical Society, Walter Sawatsky, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart IN 46517 219 295-3726

Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta, Henry D. Goerzen, 76 Skyline Cres NE, Calgary AB T1Y 4V9 403 275-6935

Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, Ted E. Friesen, Box 720, Altona MB R0G 0B0 204 324-6401

Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania, Carolyn S. Nolan, The MeetingHouse, 565 Yoder Road, Box 82, Harleysville PA 19438 215 256-3020

Mennonite Historical Society of Iowa, Lois Swartzentruber Gugel, archivist, 710 12th Street, Kalona IA 52247 319 656-3732

Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario, Reg Good, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo Ontario N2L 3G6 519 885-0220

Mennonite Information Center, Dorothy Brenneman, 5798 County Rd. 77, Box 324, Berlin OH 44610

Mennonite Library and Archives, John D. Thiesen, Bethel College, North Newton KS 67117 316 283-2500 ext. 304

Michiana Anabaptist Historians, John F. Murray, 303 East Indiana, Kouts IN 46347 219 766-3981

Mifflin County Mennonite Historical Society, Paul Bender, P.O. Box 5603, Belleville PA 17004 717 935-2598 or 717 935-5574

Muddy Creek Farm Library, Amos B. and Nora B. Hoover, 376 N. Muddy Creek Road, Denver PA 17517 215 848-4849

Nebraska Mennonite Historical Society, Eldon Hostetler, 1014 First Street, Apt. 6, Milford NE 68405 402 761-3072

North Central Mennonite Conference Historian, Melvin Hochstetler, Route 1, Box 116, Wolford ND 58385 701 583-2562

Northern District Conference, Rachel Senner, Freeman Academy, 748 South Main, Freeman SD 57209 605 925-4237

Northwest Conference Historian, Harry Stauffer, Route 1, Tofield AB T0B 4J0 403 662-2144

Ohio Amish Library, Paul Kline, 4292 Star Route 39, Millersburg OH 44654 216 893-2883

Ohio Conference Historical Committee, Kenneth Nisly, 3781 Cranwood Street NW, N. Canton OH 44720 216 494-0120

Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society, Hope K. Lind, 28773, Gimpl Hill Road, Eugene OR 97402 503 344-5974

Pacific Coast Conference, Margaret Shetler 5326 Briar Knob Loop NE, Scotts Mills OR 97375 503 873-6406

The People's Place, Merle and Phyllis Pellman Good, Main Street, Intercourse PA 17534 717 768-7171

Pequea Bruderschaft Library, on Old Leacock Road, one forth mile south of Gordonville; mailing address: 176 North Hollander Road, Gordonville PA 17529

Saskatchewan Mennonite Historical Society, Dick H. Epp, 2326 Cairns Avenue, Saskatoon SK S7J 1V1

Shenadoah Valley Mennonite Historians, Laban Peachey, R 10, Box 206, Harrisonburg VA 22801 703 833-5131

Stark County Mennonite and Amish Historical Society, Elmer S. Yoder, 35ll Edison Street NE, Hartville OH 44632 216 877-9566

Southeast Mennonite Conference, Martin W. Lehman, conference historian, 765 Dean Avenue, Sarasota FL 34237 813 366-3381

South Central Conference Historian, Bernice L. Hostetler, Route 2, Box 77, Harper KS 67058 316 896-2040

Swiss Community Historical Society, Keith Sommer, Box 5, Bluffton OH 45817

Swiss Heritage Society, Claren Neuenschwander, 805 W. Van Buren, Berne IN 219 587-2784

Virginia Conference Historical Committee, James O. Lehman, Menno Simons Historical Library and Archives, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg VA 22801 703 432-4170

Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist and Pietist Groups, Donald B. Kraybill, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown PA 17022 717 367-1151

Western District Conference Historical Committee, James Juhnke, 104 W. 26th Street, North Newton KS 67117 316 283-1236

News and Notes

A **Homer F. North Historical Library** was established at the North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Indiana, when this congregation celebrated its 100th anniversary, back in 1980. Elta Anderson, Goshen, Indiana, is currently working through some of Homer North's sermons and diaries that are in this library. He served that church from 1926-64.

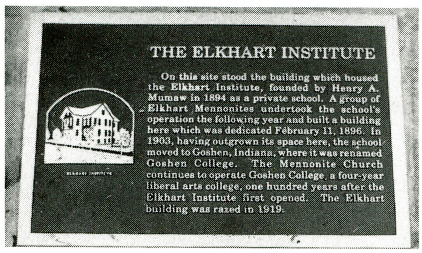
Iglesia Menonita Del Calvario (Calvary Mennonite Church), Mathis, Texas, celebrated its 50th anniversary on November 6, 1994. John Lehman, Elkhart, Indiana, attended this anniversary and reported that, for this occasion, they opened up and read the documents that had been put in the cornerstone

Leading the September 10 dedication of the Elkhart Institute plaque were (l-r) Elkhart mayor James Perrin, Prairie Street Mennonite Church co-pastor Harold J. Yoder, Goshen College president Victor Stoltzfus and Goshen mayor Mike Puro. credit: Dennis Stoesz.

of the education wing of the church on February 13, 1955. This cornerstone had been laid by T. K. Hershey and Lester Kropf, the Voluntary Service Unit leader.

A **Mennonite Central Committee 75th Anniversary Exhibit** will be featured at the Kaufman Museum at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas. It is to open on May 15, 1995. It is being headed by Robert Kreider, and will focus on themes such as "Hungry and Ragged," "Sick and Lonely," "Refugees and the Homeless—When Disaster Strikes," "From Swords to Plowshares," "Helping People Help Themselves," etc. It is hoped that the exhibit will evoke personal responses and will also help persons reflect on broader issues of public policy.

Goshen College (1903-) continues to celebrate its centennial this school year. On March 24-26, 1995, the College will host a conference on "The Church and the College in Partnership: A Vision for the Future," with Dr. Ernest Boyer as the keynote speaker. One of the earlier events of this celebration was the dedication of a plaque on the site where the **Elkhart Institute** (1894-1903) once stood, the forerunner to Goshen College. The site is now a parking lot across from the Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Indiana. The plaque was laid in the sidewalk and was dedicated as part of the kickoff events on September 10, 1994.



A plaque placed in the sidewalk at the site of Elkhart Institute was dedicated on September 10.

Twelve Indiana Mennonite women were highlighted at the fall meeting of the **Michiana Anabaptist Historians** on October 29, 1994. **Mary Esther Bigler**, a graduate of La Junta Mennonite School of Nursing in 1927, talked of her nursing career, and how the Mennonite Nurses' Association began when hometown nurses like herself met with foreign nurses who returned from the foreign field. **Clara Hooley Hershberger** shared the story of her longtime commitment to children, first as director of the summer Bible school at Hesston, Kansas, in 1923, and then as Sunday school superintendent of the College Mennonite Church, 1925-68. Paton Yoder told of the lifelong teaching career of his sister, **Rhea Yoder** (1898-1992), Elkhart County, Indiana, and at Woodstock, India. It was at a time when nursing was one of the few options for single women interested in foreign mission work.

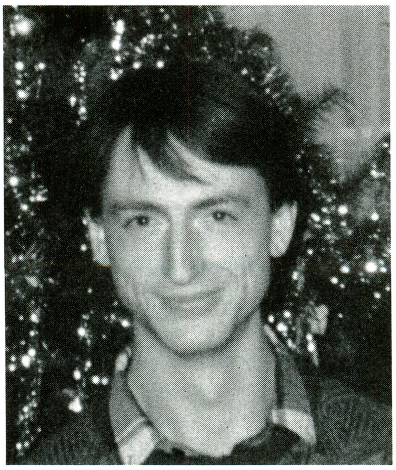
Angela Showalter, senior history major at Goshen College, introduced the group to the other nine women whose papers have been deposited at the Archives of the Mennonite Church. She said the threads and fabric of these women's lives, as she found evidence of them in their archival collections, will make the overall quilt of our heritage stronger. Showalter was involved in a special cataloging project of women's collections at the Archives over the summer of 1994. The project was made possible as part of the Indiana Heritage Research Grants program. Two more public programs are being planned as an outgrowth of this archival cataloging project: one by the Elkhart County Historical Society, Bristol, and the other by Menno-Hof, an interpretive center at Shipshewana, Indiana.

Russell Krabill has stepped down as president of the **Michiana Anabaptist Historians**, which he helped found in 1991. John F. Murray, pastor of the Hopewell congregation, Kouts, Indiana, 1961-90, was elected as the new president at the fall meeting, held on October 29, 1994. Viola Christner, a retired school teacher from Wakarusa, Indiana, was reelected treasurer.

Corrections: Rudy Senger (not Rudy Zenger) is the correct name of a Goshen College graduate of 1917. He was incorrectly identified on the 1903 photograph of the groundbreaking ceremony for Goshen College, in the October 1994 issue of the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*. Senger was born in 1872 and grew up in Stark County, Ohio. A carpenter by trade, he worked in the Bible correspondence department at Goshen College, 1906-14, graduated from the Academy in 1913, and graduated from Goshen College in 1917. Wilmer Swope, Leetonia, Ohio, sent this correction.

Orvin C. Kurtz (not Jonathan Kurtz) is the correct identification of another person found in the same photo. Kurtz is kneeling in the second row, fourth from left. Hilda (Kurtz) Troyer, Fairview, Mich., who correctly identified her father, writes: Kurtz "had previously attended Elkhart Institute and was 23 years old in 1903. He had often told tales about attending the Institute with J. S. Hartzler."

John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest Winners 1994



Mike Driedger, Queen's University

Class I - Seminary and Graduate School

First place: Mike Driedger, Queen's University, "Cannons, Gunpowder and Mennonite Nonresistance in Northern Germany."

Second Place: Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, Toronto School of Theology, "Martin Luther and Menno Simons on Christian Freedom."

Third Place: Richard L. Eby, Western Michigan University, "The Women and Men Who Established the Mennonite Home Mission in Chicago, 1893-1900."

Class II - Undergraduate College and University

First place: Krista Enns, Pomona College, "Shall Your Daughters Prophesy?"

Second place: Weldon Carl Epp, University of Manitoba, "Village Farming Among Mennonite Homesteaders: The Judith Epp Family Farm, 1894-1919."

Third place: Sarah Buhler, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, "A Brief History of Forty Years of MCC Involvement in Vietnam 1954-1943."

Eighteen students submitted 20 papers. In each class first-place winners are awarded $100; second-place, $50; and third-place, $25. Winners also receive a one-year subscription to the *Mennonite Quarterly Review.* All entrants receive a one-year subscription to the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin.*

Krista Enns, Pomona College

This year's entries were judged by Leonard Gross, Walter Sawatsky and David Rempel Smucker. The annual contest is sponsored by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church.

The deadline for submission of entries for next year's contest is June 15, 1995.

Mennonite Historical Bulletin
Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church
1700 South Main Street
Goshen, IN 46526
Telephone 219 535-7477
Forward and Address Correction Requested

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Scottdale, Pa
Permit No. 3

MENNONITE
Historical Bulletin

Vol. LVI | April 1995 | ISSN 0025-9357 | No. 2

Hesston College faculty, 1911-1912. Front row, left to right: D. H. Bender, Esther Lehman, Stella Cooprider, J. D. Charles. Back row, left to right: M. D. Landis, J. B. Smith, T. M. Erb, W. W. Oesch, Harry A. Diener. Credit: Paul Bender Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.

Theological Uncertainty Beyond the Mystic Border

by Joseph Miller

During the wheat harvest of 1912, the American tramp poet Vachel Lindsay traveled across the continent seeking to discover the unique character of the American heartland. When Lindsay arrived at the eastern edge of Kansas, the poet wrote in his journal: "I have crossed the mystic border, I've left the earth. I've entered Wonderland. Though I am still east of the geographical center of the United States, in every spiritual sense I am in the West. This morning I passed the stone milepost that marks the beginning of Kansas."

Vachel Lindsay worked his way across the Great Plains by hiring himself out to wheat farmers as a field hand. Remarkably, during that summer of 1912, the poet found himself working on the farm of Kansas Mennonite, John Longenecker. Lindsay was impressed by the simple Mennonite people, and even went to a worship service at the Pennsylvania meetinghouse near Hesston, Kansas, with the Longenecker family. Later, publishing an account of his visit among Kansas Mennonites, Lindsay wrote:

"On the men's side of the house, the division on dress is more acute. The Holiness movement, the doctrine of the second blessing that has stirred many rural Methodist

groups has attacked the Mennonites also. Those who dispute for the new ism of sanctification leave off their neckties as a sign. Those that retain their neckties, satisfied with what Menno Simonis *[sic]* taught, have a hard time remaining in a state of complete calm. Temptation to argue the matter is almost more than flesh can bear."

The poet's eye was also caught by John Longenecker's daughter, Mary, as she breezed around the farmhouse. He writes how he was "thrilled to see the fairest member of the household enter . . . her prayer covering on her head, her white feet shining like those of Nicolette and her white hymnbook in her hand."

Even as a person whose encounter with Kansas Mennonites was serendipitous, Vachel Lindsay saw correctly and expressed succinctly how the Holiness theology of the prairie significantly influenced Kansas Mennonites. The "fourfold gospel" taught at Holiness camp meetings proclaimed with certitude a new theology of justification, sanctification, divine healing, and premillennialism. This was a theology not known before among Mennonites. Additionally, there was a strong emphasis against such things as fashionable clothing, amusements, tobacco, and intoxicating liquors.

Diaries and letters from the early 20th century and the memories of the old timers show time and again how the Mennonites of central Kansas were affected by their attendance at Holiness camp meetings. George R. Brunk I and his brother, Joseph Brunk, came away from attending camp meetings convinced that wearing neckties was sinful. Soon the Brunks had convinced many Kansas Mennonites to throw away their neckties.

T. M. and Lizzie Ann (Hess) Erb of Hesston, Kansas. T. M.'s diaries chronicle the theological controversies in central Kansas. He is pictured here after he burned his neckties in the furnace. Credit: South Central Mennonite Conference Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.

Paul Erb, former editor of the *Gospel Herald*, recalled the day his bishop father, T. M. Erb, came home from a church meeting where the Brunk brothers had insisted that wearing a necktie was sinful. "Our father came in the door," said Paul Erb, "went upstairs, gathered all his neckties into a box and proclaimed as he passed us: `I'm going to burn the devil in the furnace!' "

There was a growing lack of theological clarity among the Mennonites in Kansas until the founding of Hesston Academy in 1909. With the beginnings of the academy, articulate Mennonite teachers and ministers, such as D. H. Bender, J. B. Smith and J. D. Charles arrived in the West and began to teach, not only at the local school, but as ministers these men also preached in the meetinghouses of Kansas. These eastern men were clear in their own minds that there was no such thing as a second work of grace, and they spoke out against the kind of Christian justification that was preached at Holiness camp meetings.

With the founding of Hesston Academy in 1909, the new paradigm for Mennonites of central Kansas was no longer Holiness camp meetings, but a book first published in 1898 by the Mennonite Publishing Company entitled

The ***Mennonite Historical Bulletin*** is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Church Historical Association.

Editor: John E. Sharp; **Review editor:** Steven D. Reschly; **Designer:** Julie Kauffman. **Contributing editors:** J. Robert Charles, Sandra Cronk, Marlene Epp, Reg Good, Rachel Waltner Goossen, Leonard Gross, Amos B. Hoover, Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Russell Krabill, Glenn M. Lehman, Joseph Liechty, Joseph Miller, Levi Miller, Steven Nolt, Erv Schlabach, Jonathan Showalter, Mary Sprunger, Dennis Stoesz, Gerald Studer, Wilmer Swope, Marilyn Helmuth Voran, Frank Yoder.

Historical Committee: Beulah Stauffer Hostetler, Gerald Hudson, Arlin D. Lapp, Hope Kauffman Lind, Steven D. Reschly (chair), John D. Roth, Kimberly Schmidt, Samuel J. Steiner, Carolyn C. Wenger.

Dues for subscription-membership in the Mennonite Church Historical Association ($20 annual), inquiries, articles, or news items should be sent to the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526. Telephone 219 535-7477, fax 219 535-7660.

Microfilms of Volumes I-L of the ***Mennonite Historical Bulletin*** are available from: University Microfilms, Inc., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Manual of Bible Doctrines.
Interestingly, D. H. Bender, the first president of Hesston Academy, was one of the central contributing writers of this new manual.

D. H. Bender was not a trifling Mennonite leader. He had his start as a protégé of John F. Funk and the Mennonite Publishing Company. Bender continued his church work under the Mennonite colossus Daniel Kauffman. At the time he became president of Hesston Academy, D. H. Bender was a central figure of the inner circle of leaders of the Mennonite Church.

Bible Doctrines is hardly considered ideal Mennonite theology today. From the vantage point of the late 20th century, many Mennonites find Kauffman's book doctrinaire and out of step with traditional Mennonite theology that was rooted in a hermeneutic community. But for the Mennonites of central Kansas in the early 20th century, their small isolated communities seemed uniquely vulnerable theologically. For these folk *Bible Doctrines* became much more than just one more book from the Mennonite press in Elkhart. It may not overstate the matter to suggest that *Bible Doctrines* is what helped keep the Mennonites of central Kansas from being theologically lost.

James C. Juhnke has written eloquently about the way Mennonites generally began to shift away from tradition and nonverbal ritual as transmitters of values in community toward more precise written teachings and rules through the work of men like Daniel Kauffman and D. H. Bender.

Yet *Bible Doctrines* became a much needed anchor for the scattered and isolated Mennonites living on the prairies. These Mennonites were profoundly cut off from their home communities of Ohio, Virginia, and Pennsylvania where the faith, it seemed, did not need to be parsed and explained.

Clearly, for a Mennonite living in Lancaster County or Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, it proved to be immensely easier to drink deeply of the nuance and tradition of the Mennonite ethos than it was for the clusters of Mennonite families living more isolated lives in the West. One can only wonder what might have happened to the Mennonites of the prairie states without the *Manual of Bible Doctrines.*

Leah Erb (d. 1939 at age 97), moved with her husband, Deacon Jacob Erb and family, from Mount Joy, Pennsylvania, and "crossed the mystic border" into Kansas in 1885. Credit: South Central Mennonite Conference Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Chruch, Goshen, Indiana.

The stage of history has too many examples of Kansas Mennonites who lost their spiritual moorings in the early 1900's and rather quickly drifted off into non-Mennonite fellowships and congregations. Perhaps Daniel Kauffman's own Missouri upbringing is an important factor in why and how *Bible Doctrines* was written. Even though Kauffman was born in what is now a part of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference, his family moved west while he was still a boy. By Mennonite geography, Kauffman grew up as a westerner and was far removed from those Mennonite centers where tradition and nonverbal rituals could serve as transmitters of values to future generations.

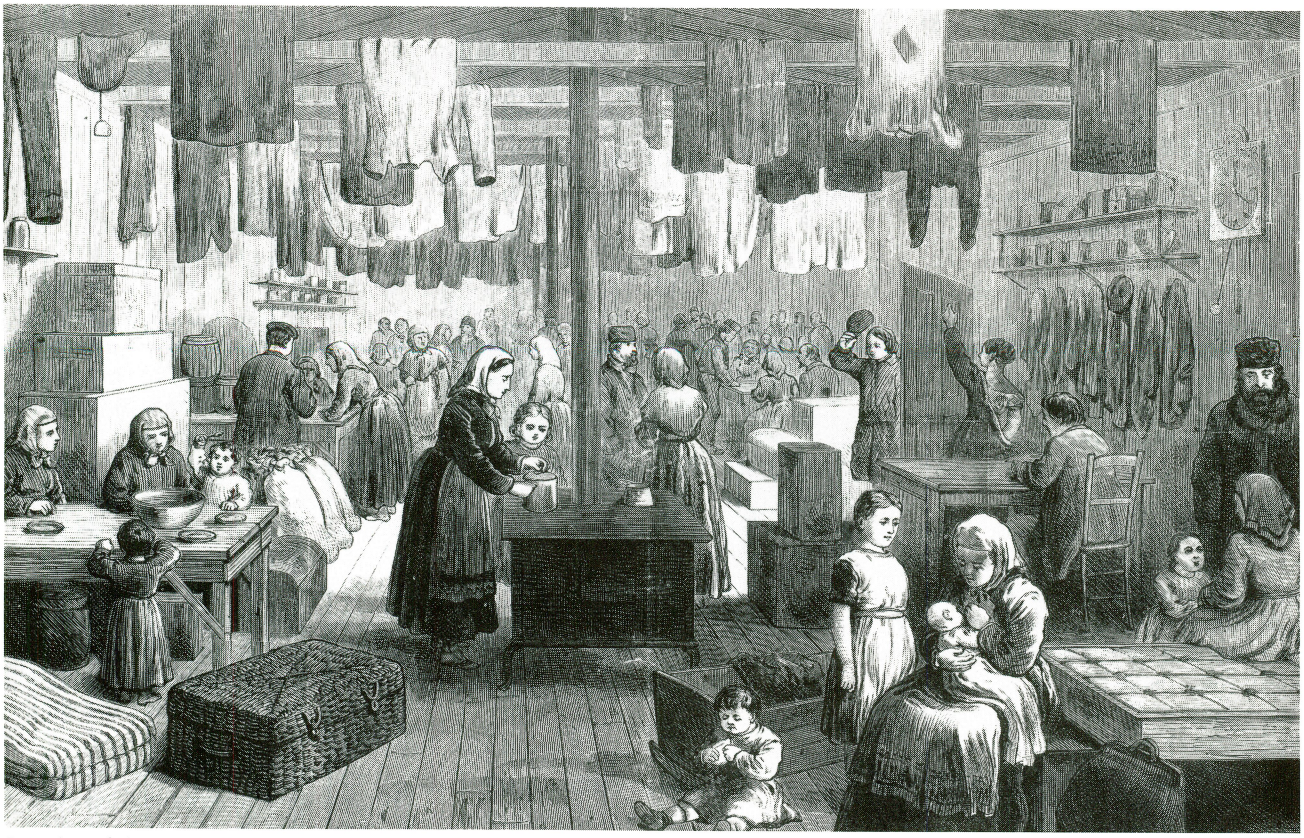
Daniel Kauffman, who grew up near the "mystic border" that Vachel Lindsay said marked the beginning of the West, knew viscerally the challenges that Mennonites living in the West faced. His creative genius for doctrine converged in *Bible Doctrines*, which did much to unite western Mennonites.

Many years after Vachel Lindsay had crossed into the wonderland of Kansas, a young English professor at Hesston College and Academy saw the poet's name listed as an available speaker. The young professor, Paul Erb, invited Lindsay to come back to the community he had loved to read his poetry at Hesston College.

But Paul Erb was disappointed because Lindsay appeared to be a broken man who seemed to have lost his zest for all but the cigarettes he smoked constantly. Erb also remembered his additional disappointment that the Mennonites of Hesston did not understand or much appreciate Lindsay's poetry. Erb recalled: "I drove Vachel Lindsay from the college to the railroad station in Newton, and as I drove back home to Hesston I wondered what had happened to the enthusiastic young man who had years earlier been so thrilled when he had crossed the mystic border and entered Kansas."

—Joseph Miller is pastor of Bethel Mennonite Church of Lancaster, and a contributing editor of the Mennonite Historical Bulletin.

Mennonites in Kansas



Interior of the Santa Fe immigration house for Kansas Mennonites. Credit: Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

by John D. Thiesen

Kansas has a larger population of Mennonites than any other state west of the Mississippi (although California is rapidly catching up). There are about 35,000 Mennonites in Kansas, counting adults and children. Kansas has the highest percentage of Mennonites in its total population of any state in the West or Midwest, perhaps in the whole country (Pennsylvania would be the only other contender in that category.) About 1.5 percent of the Kansas population is some variety of Mennonite.

The center of Mennonite population in Kansas is in an ellipse 50 miles east-west and 40 miles north-south, centered in southwestern Marion County near the small town of Goessel. This covers parts of Marion, Butler, Harvey, McPherson, and Reno counties. Many smaller Mennonite concentrations are scattered widely throughout the state.

Mennonites began moving to Kansas in 1869 or 1870. The first families to arrive came from Pennsylvania, Virginia, Indiana, and other states to the east (including the family of the well-known George R. Brunk). They began the oldest congregation—Spring Valley Mennonite Church—in what is now the MC South Central Conference. One of the early MC leaders in Kansas was a bishop from Illinois with the unlikely Mennonite name of Benjamin Franklin Hamilton.

The peak year of Mennonite immigration into Kansas was 1874, when large congregations of Mennonites from various regions of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires (Ukraine, Volhynia, Galicia) established new homes on Santa Fe railroad land. They created the concentration of Mennonites in south-central Kansas that still is evident 120 years later. Most of these immigrants were of Dutch-north German (Low German) ethnic background, but there were also some groups of Swiss background who left villages in Volhynia and Galicia to come to Kansas.

Also arriving in the 1870s were small groups of immigrants from Prussia and families of south German background who had first lived in Iowa and Illinois. The Iowa south Germans were the founders of the General Conference in 1860 and the south German families in Kansas provided several generations of leadership to GC churches and conferences.

Some Mennonite migration to Kansas continued after the 1870s.

The first Amish arrived in 1883 to begin what is still the most well-known Amish settlement in the state, located at Yoder, Kansas. By this time, though, the Mennonite population pattern for Kansas was fairly well set.

Many of the 1870s immigrants joined in what soon was called the Western District Conference (GC). The GCs now make up somewhat over a third of Kansas Mennonites.

The second largest Mennonite grouping, the Mennonite Brethren, is also made up largely of descendants of the 1870s immigrants from Russia.

A third element of Russian immigrant background were evangelized by John Holdeman soon after their arrival and now dominate the membership of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, locally known as "Holdemans." The Holdemans are the most easily noticed of Kansas Mennonite groups, since they maintain dress regulations, some limits on use of technology, and restrictions on social interaction with non-Holdemans.

Besides the four larger groups (GC, MB, MC, Holdeman), there are numerous other small Mennonite-related groups represented in the state, including Evangelical Mennonite Brethren (Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches), Evangelical Mennonite Church, Conservative Mennonite Conference, Beachy Amish, Old Order Amish, several independent Mennonite congregations, and the Brethren in Christ.

The Brethren in Christ represent a bridge group to another group of related denominations, the Brethren. (The Brethren in Christ are listed in both the Mennonite Encyclopedia and the Brethren Encyclopedia.) Dwight D. Eisenhower, the greatest military leader of the twentieth century, came from a non-resistant Brethren in Christ background. The population of the various Brethren-related groups in Kansas is more widely scattered around the state than the Mennonites. It includes some plain groups, such as the Old German Baptist Brethren, found in several settlements in Kansas. The town of McPherson is an institutional center for the Brethren, with Church of the Brethren-affiliated McPherson College. The Brethren population in Kansas is about one quarter the number of Mennonites.

Pioneer Susan Heatwole Brunk was widowed eight days after arriving in Kansas. Her son, George R. Brunk I, was two years old. After the death of Henry, Susan married Matthias Cooprider. Credit: South Central Mennonite Conference Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.

David Goerz (1849-1914) was a General Conference Mennonite minister, editor, teacher, leader, and visionary. Born near Berdyansk, South Russia, he migrated to Summerfield, Illinois, in 1873, and then to Halstead, Kansas, in 1875. He promoted education, missions, publishing, and music. Credit: Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

South-central Kansas has a concentration of Mennonite institutions to match the population. This includes conference offices (the GC denominational offices in Newton and the MB U.S.conference offices in Hillsboro, plus district conference offices of several groups), hospitals, retirement homes, mutual insurance organizations, MCC Central States office, and a Mennonite Disaster Service office (MDS was founded in Kansas in the early 1950s). Most prominent are the three Mennonite colleges: Hesston College (MC) in Hesston, Tabor College (MB) in Hillsboro, and Bethel College (GC) in North Newton.

Another feature of the Kansas Mennonite landscape is the number of extinct congregations. Especially in the western half of the state, many tiny Mennonite congregations have organized and then disappeared in the last century, as members have moved away from the center of Mennonite population in search of a way to make a living or in search of farmland or jobs. About one third of congregations existing in 1955 have closed and have been replaced by a roughly equal number of new congregations.

Historical activities among Kansas Mennonites have concentrated around two of the colleges. The Mennonite Library and Archives (Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117-9989; 316 284-5304; John D. Thiesen, archivist) was founded in 1936, although it was based on some earlier historical collecting efforts at the college. It is the official archival repository for the General Conference and for the Western District Conference, and for the college itself. The library

attempts to cover Mennonite history and its context. The archives also actively collects personal papers from individuals and families, both leaders and ordinary church members, documenting both institutional activities and everyday life.

The Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies (Tabor College, Hillsboro, KS 67063; 316 947-3121; Peggy Goertzen, director) was founded in 1939, again growing out of earlier efforts at the college. It is one of three official MB archival centers and is the official depository for the MB U.S. conference as well as the Southern District, Central District, North Carolina, and Latin American conferences, and for Tabor College. The Center manages both published and unpublished materials and also has a significant collection of personal papers.

The Western District Conference (GC) has an active historical committee (James C. Juhnke, chair; Box 44, North Newton, KS 67117), which acts to some extent to compensate for the lack of a denomination-wide GC historical committee. Activities have included bringing in special speakers to district churches and helping congregations build up libraries of significant books in Mennonite history. The South Central Conference (MC) has a conference historian, Bernice Hostetler (Rt. 2, Box 77, Harper, KS 67058), who also attends the Western District committee meetings. The MBs are served by unofficial conference historians Wesley Prieb, Raymond F. Wiebe, and David F. Wiebe. Other Mennonite groups in Kansas do not have district historical committees.

Several museums in the area focus on Mennonites: Kauffman Museum (Bethel College, North Newton, KS 67117; 316 283-1612), the Mennonite Heritage Center (Box 231, Goessel, KS 67053; 316 367-8200), and the Adobe House Museum (Hillsboro, KS 67063; 316 947-3775). In Moundridge, the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Society represents the historical interests of the Amish-background, 1870s Swiss Volhynian immigrants. A number of Mennonites also participate in the Golden Wheat Chapter (in Wichita) of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia.

Brethren historical interests are represented by a Brethren library and archival collection at Brethren-affiliated McPherson College (Miller Library, 1600 E. Euclid, Box 1402, McPherson, KS 67460-1402; 316 241-0731). Unfortunately, very little staff and budget goes to support this collection.

All in all, there is surprisingly little historical activity for such a concentration of Mennonites. Considering the explosion of local and regional Mennonite historical societies in the last few years, it is time that Kansas had an inter-Mennonite (or maybe Mennonite and Brethren) historical society to promote and support church history in the congregations and for the general public.

—John D. Thiesen is archivist of the Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

Menno Simons Surfaces Again

by Donald F. Durnbaugh

Abraham Harley Cassel (1820-1908), a Dunker farmer living near Harleysville, Pennsylvania, amassed one of the largest personal libraries in 19th-century North America. As a faithful member of the German Baptist Brethren (after 1908 known as the Church of the Brethren), he collected and preserved approximately 50,000 books and documents.

Recent ordering of the Abraham Harley Cassel collection at Juniata College (Huntingdon, Pennsylvania) has turned up three more publications of the well-known autobiographical conversion account by Menno Simons (ca. 1496-1561). Two stem from the first part of the 19th century—one from Germany and the other from the United States—and the third was published a century earlier. They do not seem to have been noted by bibliographers. They are not included in Irvin B. Horst's valuable annotated bibliographical listing of Menno Simons publications (1962), which included a census of known copies.[1]

German Periodical

The first to be discussed is an article entitled simply "Menno Simons"; it was published in a German-language religious periodical, with the redundant title *Christliche Zeitschrift für Christen. Zur Beförderung des evangelischen Glaubens und Lebens* (1810). Little is known of the publisher, Privy Councillor (*Geheimrat*) G. F. Hillmer, who was evidently an official in Bavaria. He mentions in the introduction to another article that he profited from a Moravian education. A "G. R. Hillmer" is listed in the *Mennonite Bibliography, 1631-1961* (1977) in connection with a description of the Hutterian Brethren by a traveler, published in the same periodical in 1811. The *Christliche Zeitschrift* is listed in C. G. Kayser's German bibliography of the period.[2]

No source is given for this account by Menno published in 1810. It may have been a source similar to one used somewhat later that received wide circulation in the volumes on the Mennonites (1821, 1824, 1829) issued by George Leopold Reiswitz (1764-1828) and Friedrich Wadzeck (1726-1823). Although the German authors were not Mennonites, they were favorably disposed toward them and

Menno Simons (ca. 1496-1561) by C. van Sichem, 1605. Menno described his own conversion from "my unchristian abominations, my masses, infant baptism, and my easy life" to "distress and poverty under the heavy cross of Christ." See The Complete Writings of Menno Simons, p. 668-681. Photo credit: Mennonite Encyclopedia Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

wished the general public to be better informed about their history and beliefs.[3]

There had been several earlier publications of Menno's account in the German language: one by itself was published about 1700 in Frankfurt/Main and another along with his confession of faith in 1702. Another convenient possibility for the 1810 journal was included in the concise collection of Menno's works published in Büdingen in 1758; this was a German translation of a Dutch work by Johannes Deknatel (1698-1759) issued in 1753. Deknatel was a Pietist-minded Mennonite with close connections to the Moravian Brethren. The text in the Hillmer article, however, is not identical in every regard with the Büdingen text.[4]

Another possible source was Johann Heinrich Jung-Stilling (1740-1817), a Pietist academic and writer who has been called the "patriarch of the awakening." Jung-Stilling knew German Mennonites well and appreciated their piety and ethical achievement. He wrote and published a brief biography of Menno Simons in 1813. If Hillmer were, as it seems, of Pietist orientation, there could be a link here. The publisher for many of Jung-Stilling's work and that of Hillmer's periodical was the same.[5]

The editorial introduction by Hillmer to the article on Menno Simons was terse and, for its day, surprisingly generous; in translation it reads:

> *Mennonites.* The name of this Christian community is known to us all. Fewer perhaps [know] the occasion of their foundation and the character of their founder.
>
> We can learn to judge correctly the man through Menno's own simply-stated and unpretentious account, can estimate his fervor, and can extend him the leniency of love wherein he goes too far. The seal of the disciple and servant will be recognized by all who know this seal.[6]

Baptist Tract

The second publication appeared in a tract published by the American Baptist Publication and Sunday School Society based in Philadelphia; it was issued in 1841. It appears to be an exact reprinting of a pamphlet described in the Horst bibliography. The text was derived from a translation first published in *The Columbian Star* in May 1825. This periodical was a weekly newspaper in Washington, D.C., produced by the Triennial or Baptist General Convention. After 1830 it was called *The Christian Index*, published in both Philadelphia and Washington.[7]

This edition of "Menno's Departure from Popery" indicates that the translator was "Ira Chase." The author Irah Chase (1793-1864) was a Baptist pastor and educator; he taught in a Baptist theological school in Philadelphia about 1817, and soon after went to Washington, D.C., when the school became the theological department of the Columbian College. During 1823 and 1824 he traveled and studied in Europe, where he probably learned about Menno's writings. He is best known for his work as professor in the Newton Theological Institution at Andover, Massachusetts, where his ideas shaped the curriculum.

Menno's account may have achieved wide readership in the United States because of its publication in tract form.[8]

Chase had been queried about information on the Mennonites by David Benedict (1779-1874), author of a massive history of the Baptists in America and "other parts of the world" (1848). According to Benedict, Professor Chase "has had extensive personal acquaintance with this people, and has made deep researches into their history, both in Europe and in this country." In an earlier book on Baptist history, Benedict listed Menno Simons among those Christian leaders who practiced believers baptism by the method of immersion, also quoting the earlier Baptist historian Morgan Edwards (1722-1795) to this effect. These claims by Edwards and Benedict were in turn often cited by Baptist and Brethren polemicists later in the 19th century in the controversy about the correct mode of baptism, claims ardently denied by Mennonite authors.[9]

Professor Chase related in his introduction to the account by Menno Simons in 1825 that an earlier German translation had been "inserted by professor Wadzeck in his lucid work on the Mennonites, recently published in Prussia." This is the volume *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Mennoniten-Gemeindenin Europa und Amerika . . .* (1821) referred to above. Chase, however, had made his own translation from an original work by Menno, the title of which he gave as *Een Klare Beantwoordinghe over eene Schrift Gellii Fabri*, in which is embedded the "renunciation from popery" story. He located this in Menno's collected works, which has appeared in several languages. No copy of the original treatise is known to exist today.[10]

Chase commented that he had no need of the commendation that Wadzeck supplied in his book: "[W]ith the original before me, I have needed no testimonial in its favor." For, "in reading it I have been carried back three hundred years, to a most eventful period, and placed in the company of a man of apostolical spirit." The translator also quoted from the church history by Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1694-1735), providing information about Menno's last years and death in the northern German duchy of Holstein.[11]

The remarkable Abraham Harley Cassel (1820-1908), a Dunker farmer who lived near Harleysville, Pennsylvania. In his farmhouse along the Indian Creek he collected one of the largest personal libraries in 19th-century North America.

The American Baptist Historical Library in Rochester, N.Y., has an edition of the same tract issued by the Baptist General Tract Society in Philadelphia; no year of publication is included, but it was likely printed in the mid-1830s. It is possible that this is identical to the tract listed in the Horst bibliography (#138), which gives the same date as the original article (1825) as the year of publication.[12]

Radical Pietist Reprinting

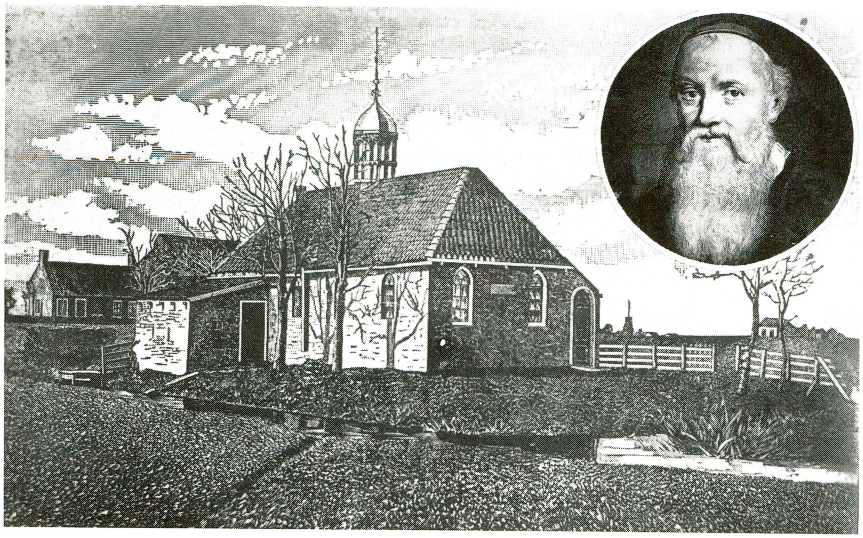
In addition to these two publications, another reprinting of Menno's renunciation has been located. This appears in the massive history of the "church and heretics" (*Unpartheyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-Historie*) compiled by the radical pietist author Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714). His history was epoch making for his time by virtue of his effort to portray religious dissenters from their own perspectives, rather than simply disparaging them as heretics and fanatics. Menno's account appeared in the fourth (and final) section of Arnold's history, which contained various documents, tracts, and testimonies of personalities and movements discussed earlier.[13]

The account is listed under the title: "The Life History of Menno Simons"; an introductory sentence reads, in translation: "To understand the history of the Mennonites, it will not be unserviceable to read about the life of their founder, especially about his change of religion, indeed, from his own narrative. . . ."[14]

Although these three publications have little significance in themselves, they help to round out the story of the wide and long-lasting impact of Menno's autobiographical account.

Notes

1. Irvin B. Horst, *A Bibliography of Menno Simons, ca. 1496-1561, Dutch Reformer: With a Census of Known Copies* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1962).
2. *Christliche Zeitschrift für Christen. Zur Beförderung des evangelischen Glaubens und Lebens. Zweyter Jahrgang, Viertes Quartal*, Geheimen Rath G. F. Hillmer, ed., (Nürnberg: Verlag der Raw'schen Buchhandlung, 1810), 667-683. See also G. R. [Geheimen Rath?] Hillmer, "Authentische Nachrichte von den sogennanten Hutterschen Brüdern in der Ukräine: Aus dem Tagebuch eines Reisenden (1802)," *Christliche Zeitschrift für Christen* (1811), listed in *Mennonite Bibliography, 1631-1961* Nelson P. Springer and A. J. Klassen, eds., (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1977) 1:483 (#14268). This may be derived from the bibliographical entry in *Die älteste Chronik der Hutterischen Brüder*, A. J. F. Zieglschmid, ed., (Ithaca, N.Y.: Carl Schurz Foundation, 1943), 907; Zieglschmid gave credit to Karl J. R. Arndt, the historian of the Harmony Society, for finding this reference. Bibliographical references to the journal are found in: C. G. Kayser, *Vollständiges Bücher-Lexicon* (Leipzig: 1834ff.) 1:145, 6:320, 7:563-564.



Drawing of Witmarsum Mennonite Church, Friesland. Here Menno was born (ca. 1496), and served as a Catholic priest from 1531-1536. A Mennonite congregation existed here by 1560. This simple meetinghouse was called the Menno Simons House, because of the tradition that Menno lived and preached here. Credit: John F. Funk Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

3. [George Leopold] von Reiswitz und [Friedrich] Wadzeck, *Beiträge zur Kenntnisz der Mennoniten-Gemeinden in Europa und America, statistischen, historischen und religiäsen Inhalts.* (Berlin: 1821), cited in Horst, 133 (#134). A second part of the book was published by von Reiswitz: *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der taufgesinnten Gemeinden oder der Mennoniten, statistischen, historischen und religiäsen, auch juristischen Inhalts* (Breslau: Carl Friedrich Fritsch, 1829). See the articles in *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1959): Christian Neff, "Reiswitz (Reisswitz), George Leopold, Baron of, 4:282-283, and Christian Hege and Harold S. Bender, "Wadzeck, Friedrich," 4:867. The volumes are listed in Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography* (1977), 1:20, 82 (#44, #1713) and in *Bibliography of Anabaptism, 1520-1630* Hans Hillerbrand, ed., (Elkhart, Ind.: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1962), 112 (#2501-#2502).

The same authors published a companion volume, which evidently repeated Menno's renunication of the church: *Glaubenbekenntniss der Mennoniten und Nachricht von ihren Colonien, nebst Lebensbeschreibung Menno Simonis . . .* (Berlin: 1824); listed in Springer and Klassen, *Mennonite Bibliography* (1977), 1:20-21 (no. 46) and Hillerbrand, *Bibliography* (1962), 190 (no. 3870).

4. *Der Ausgang oder Bekehrung Menno Simons. . .* (Frankfurt and Leipzig: Abraham Jerisch [ca. 1700]; Horst, *Bibliography* (1962), 132-133 (#132). "Des Menno Simonis Ausgang aus dem Pabstthum, Lebens-Lauff, wie auch Glaubens-Bekäntniss . . .," in *Unschuld und Gegen*-Bericht der evangelischen Tauff-gesinneten Christen, so Mennonisten genandt, ed. Gerh. Roosen (Ratzeburg: Sigismund Hoffman, 1702); Horst, *Bibliography* (1962), 141 (#146). *Kurzer Auszug von Menno Simons Schrifften . . .*, Johannes Deknatel, ed., (Büdingen: J. C. Stohr, 1758); Horst, *Bibliography* (1962), 141-142 (#147).

5. Walter Klaassen, "Menno Simons Research 1837-1937, 1986-1990," in *Menno Simons: A Reappraisal*, ed. Gerald R. Brunk (Harrisonburg, Va.: Eastern Mennonite College, 1992), 181-182. The reference is to J. H. Jung-Stilling, "Menno Simonis Lebensgeschichte," *Taschenbuch für Freunde des Christenthums* (Nürnberg: Verlag der Raw'sche Buchhandlung, 1813), with a portrait of Menno. On the author's relationship with Mennonites, see Christian Neff and Elizabeth Horsch Bender, "Jung-Stilling, Johann Heinrich," *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* (1957), 3:127-128. For recent studies on this author, see Rainer Vinke, "Jung-Stilling-Forschung von 1983 bis 1990," *Pietimus und Neuzeit* 17 (1991):178-228, and, *Jung-Stillings Welt: Das Lebenswerk eines Universalgelehrten in interdisziplinären Perspektiven*, Hans Günter Krüsselberg and Wolfgang Lück, eds., (Krefeld: M und M Wissenschaftsverlag, 1992).

6. "*Mennonisten.* Der Name dieser Christengesellschaft ist uns allen bekannt. Wenigen vielleicht die Veranlassung ihrer Stiftung, und die Person ihres Stifters. Aus Mennos' eignem einfältigen Anmassungsfreyen Bericht lerner wir den Mann rightig beurtheilen, seinen Eifer schätzen, und wo er zu weit geht, mit Nachsicht der Liebe tragen. Das Siegel des Jüngers und Knechts wird an ihm jeder erblicken, der dieses Siegel kennt." — "Menno Simons," (1810), 667.

7. *No. 18. Menno's Departure from Popery* (Philadelphia: Published by the American Baptist Publication and S[unday] S[chool] Society, No. 21 South Fourth Street, 1841), 12pp. Three sides of the cover include a similar account, in this case that of an anonymous Canadian Roman Catholic from Montreal who was born in 1777.

This tract follows the same pattern of editorial material as that compiled by Horst, *Bibliography* (1962), 135 (#138). It is not listed in the comprehensive compilation by Edward C. Starr, *A Baptist Bibliography: Being a Register of Printed Material by and about Baptists, Including Works Written Against Them* (Philadelphia: Judson Press/Chester: American Baptist Historical Society, 1937-1953).

Menno's account appeared anonymously under the rubric "Communications" on the front page of *The Columbian Star* 4 (May 28, 1825), no. 23. I am indebted to James R. Lynch, director of the American Baptist/Samuel Colgate Historical Library for a copy of this article and other relevant information.

8. William H. Allison, "Chase, Irah," *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Scribner's, 1931), 4:25-26. The *Columbian Star* may have been a publication of Columbian College.

9. David Benedict, *A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America and Other Parts of the World* (New York: Lewis Colby and Company, 1848), 130-132. Further information on Mennonites is found on pages 598-599 and 910-911. Benedict wrote an earlier work with the same title, but with different content: (Boston: Lincoln and Edmands, 1813 2 vols.), with claims about Menno's adherence to baptism by immersion. Benedict had first become engaged in controversy about the correct form of baptism with a satirical poem, published as *The Watery War: Or, A Poetical Description between the Pedobaptists and Baptists, on the Subjects and Mode of Baptism*, using the pen name "John of Enon." Benedict also discussed the Mennonites briefly in another work, *A History of All Religions . . .* (Providence: John Miller, 1824), 203, 207.

The additional data on Mennonites and baptism was from Morgan Edwards, *Materials Towards a History of the American Baptists, both British and*

German, Distinguished into First-day Baptists, Keithian Baptists, Seventh-day Baptists, Tunker Baptists, Mennonite Baptists. Vol. 1. (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank and Isaac Collins, 1770), 90ff. Edwards' information on the Mennonites in colonial America has been used recently in Richard K. MacMaster, *Land, Piety, Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America, 1683-1790* (Scottdale, Pa: Herald Press, 1985).

The debate over the correct form of baptism is reviewed in John Horsch, "Did Menno Simons Practice Baptism by Immersion?" *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 1 (January, 1927): 54-56.

10. *Menno's Departure from Popery* I. Chase, trans. (1841), [1]. For information on the response to Faber, see Horst, *Bibliography* (1962), 100 (#57).

11. *Menno's Departure from Popery* I. Chase, trans. (1841), [1]; Johannes Lorenz von Mosheim, *Institutiones historiae ecclesiasticae recentiores* (Helmstedt: 1741); this was translated into several modern languages.

12. *No. 18. Menno's Departure from Popery* (Philadelphia: Baptist General Tract Society, No. 36, North Fifth Street, [n.d.]); this tract is listed in the publication *The Tracts of the Baptist General Tract Society* (Philadephia: Published at their Depository, No. 36, North Fifth Street, [n.d.]).

13. There is a considerable literature in German on Gottfried Arnold; see a summary article with bibliography in Johannes Wallmann, *Der Pietismus*, Band 4, Lieferung O 1, *Die Kirche in ihrer Geschichte* (G"ttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 89-95. A useful monograph in English is Peter C. Erb, *Pietists, Protestants, and Mysticism: The Use of Late Medieval Spiritual Texts in the Work of Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714)* (Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, 1989).

Springer and Klaasen, *Mennonite Bibligraphy, 1631-1961* (1977), #1698-1699, cites Arnold's descriptive passages on the Mennonites but does not include a reference to Menno's renunciation.

14. "Menno Simonis *Lebens=Lauff.* Zur historia derer Mennonisten ist ihres anfängers leben, und vornemlich dessen religions-veränderung zu lesen nicht undienlich, und zwar aus seiner eigenen erzehlung, welche also lautet:"—Gottfried Arnold, *Unpartheyische Kirchen- und Ketzer-Historie*, 2nd. ed. (Frankfurt/Main: Thomas Fritschens sel. Erben, 1729), 2:526-530.

—Donald F. Durnbaugh is archivist of the Beeghly Library, Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.

Recent Publications

Carlsen, Robert, compiler, *Descendants of Henry Bowman*. Oakhurst, CA: Published by author, 1993. Pp. 69.

Cross, Marie (Steury) and Pat Hochstedler, *Family Record of George Cross & Fannie Eash and Their Descendents* (sic). Goshen, IN: Published by authors, 1994. Pp. 112.

Dice, Evelyn Funk, compiler, *The Ancestors & Descendants of Jacob Brechbill Sollenberger and His Wife, Frances Meyers Sollenberger*. Chambersburg, PA: Published by author, 1993. Pp. 88.

Fahrney, Walter and Omer Long, *The Descendants of Dr. Peter Fahrney (1767-1837)*, 1993. Pp. 199. $10. Order from publisher: Omer Long, 414 Columbus Ave., Frederick, MD 21701.

Ford, Ada Lou, *Wolf Family Record: Descendants of Abraham and Julia Wolf (An Update)*. San Marcos, CA: Published by author, 1992. Pp. 118.

Frick, Paul Summer, *A History of Fricks Locks (Vol. I), The Hans Grumbacher Family*. Arizona City, AZ: Published by author, 1993. Pp. 103. $10. Available from: Olde Springfield Shoppe, Elverson, PA 19520.

Hofer, Marnette D. (Ortman), *The F. Christian & Anna Eleanora (Zafft) Ortmann Family History 1800-1992*. Dolton, SD: Published by author, 1993. Pp. 466. $33.

Kintner, Elgin P., *Edward Kintner and Glada Snyder: Ancestral Genealogy and Tour Guide*. Maryville, TN: Published by author, 1994. Pp. 310. $24.50. Available from: Olde Springfield Shoppe, Elverson, PA 19520.

Kraybill, Dr. Herman F., *Kraybill Family History: Sixteenth Through Twentieth Centuries*. Kensington, MD: A Scribbler's Press, 1993. Pp. 199.

Mellinger, C. Mervin, *Descendants of Hans Ulrich Huber, Warwick Twp., Lancaster Co., Pa.* Willow Street, PA: Published by author, 1993.

Miller, Ella J., compiler, *The Growing Generation of Jacob M. Miller, 1869-1992*. Topeka, IN: Published by author, 1993. Pp. 76. $7.50. Available from: Olde Springfield Shoppe, Elverson, PA 19520.

Neff & Associates, compilers, *The Neff-Näf Family: A history of the descendants of Henry Neff*. Princeton Junction, NJ: Published by authors, 1991. Pp. 467.

Ratzlaff, Agatha (Enns), *Ratzlaff: Our Family Heritage*. Clearbrook, BC: Published by author, 1992. Pp. 163.

Richard, Kent E., *The Michel (1787-1863) Richard Family*. 1994. $14.75 + $2.50 (s/h). Order from publisher: Kent E. Richard, Box 77, Talmage, PA 17580.

Roth, Lorraine and John Bradley Arthaud, *The Jacob LeBold and Magdalena Blank Family, 1800-1993*. Waterloo, ON: Published by authors, 1994. $10. Order from: Dr. John *Bradley* Arthaud, 3201 Woodkirk Dr., Columbia, MO 65203.

Snowbarger, Willis E., *The Snowbarger Family in Kansas, Volume I: Sam and Katie*. Olathe, KS: Published by author, 1990. Pp. 62.

Spohn, Clarence, *The Bauman/Bowman Family of the Cocalico Valley: Printers, Papermakers & Tavernkeepers*. Ephrata, PA: Historical Society of Cocalico Valley, 1994. Pp. 94. $14.50.

Walsmith, Thelma Berkey, *Genealogy of Jacob Berkey and Related Families, Somerset County, Pennsylvania.*

Breaking the Silence on Faith and Economics

by Daniel J. Miller

Anabaptist/Mennonite Faith and Economics, Calvin Redekop, Victor A. Krahn and Samuel J. Steiner, eds. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1994, pp. 444. $33.00 (paper), $71.50 (hardcover).

This book presents revised and edited versions of papers presented at a conference called "Anabaptist Faith and Economics: Breaking the Silence" which was held at Conrad Grebel College in 1990. The premise of this book is that Anabaptist-Mennonites have become increasingly involved in economics but the church has failed to respond with appropriate theological and ethical guidance.

This has caused numerous persons in the Mennonite community to wonder whether a conspiracy of silence has descended on the community, and if so, why?

The essays are presented in chronological order. They begin by describing the 16th-century Anabaptist economic practices. Economic life was seen by the early Anabaptists as belonging to the secular world. They were suspicious of trade and commerce as a means of earning one's living.

The two basic principles which they upheld were voluntary mutual aid and various degrees of communal economic systems (the latter exemplified by the Hutterites). As the Anabaptist movement spread to places like Holland, Russia and France, more complex economic systems developed. Each of these is described in detail. The relationship between wealth, lifestyle,

Santa Maria, CA: Published by author. $20. Order from: Thelma Berkey Walsmith, 919 Via Fedora, Santa Maria, CA 93455.

Andrews, George W., *Descendants of Johannes & Catharine Thomas of Frederick County, Maryland.* Akron, PA: Published by author, 1994. Pp. 42. Order from: Author, 20 Ridgewood Dr., Akron, PA 17501.

Close, Betty, *Stover Genealogy and Family History.* Centreville, MI: Published by author, 1993. Order from: Author, 62764 Kuhlmeyer Rd., Centreville, MI 49032-9736.

Kliewer, Victor, *Kliewer: Family of Peter Kliewer & Anna Adrian 1813-1992.* Winnipeg, MB: Published by author, 1992. Pp. 194. Order from: Werner Kliewer, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Krabill, Russell R., *John Shank Hiestand 1909-1992: Mennonite Minister & Founder of the Congregational Bible Church.* Elkhart, IN: Published by author, 1992. Pp. 29. Order from: Author, 26221 Vista Ln., Elkhart, IN 46517.

Mast, Malinda, *Descendants of Noah Mast and Sarah Beachy 1850-1994.* Charm, OH: Published by author, 1994. Pp. 137. $8. Order from: Author, 4511 SR 557, Box 3, Charm, OH 44617.

Miller, DeWitt Henry, *Ancestors & Descendents [sic] of Samuel J. Rhodes & Lydia Catherine Niswander.* Roanoke, VA: Published by author, 1993. Pp. 79. Order from: Author, 5386 Luwana Dr. SW, Roanoke, VA 24018.

Neufeld, Arnie, ed., *A Family Portrait: Stories & Adventures of the Klassen/Peters family.* Winkler, MB: Heritage Valley Pub. 1993. Pp. 138. $14. Order from: Editor, PO Box 224, Winkler, MB R6W 4A5.

Oyer, Phyllis Smith, *Oyer and Allied Families, Supplement I.* Rochester, NY: Published by author, 1994. Pp. 71 and index. Order from: Author, 263 Bakerdale Rd., Rochester, NY 14616-3654.

Penner, Chris, ed., *Zacharias-Hiebert Family History.* Altona, MB: Zacharias Book Comm. 1993. Pp. 146. Order from: Editor, Zacharias Family Book Committee, Altona, MB R0G 0B0.

Roth, Donald W., *The Family of Benedict & Catharina (Lauber) Roth.* Fort Wayne, IN: Published by author, 1994. Pp. 187. Order from: Author, 2733 Windridge Ct., Fort Wayne, IN 46845.

Snyder, Alice S., *Family History of Henry G. & Anna Bomberger Snyder, Lititz, PA.* Lititz, PA: Published by author, 1988. Pp. 22. Order from: Author, 301 E 2nd Ave., Lititz, PA 17543.

Stucky, Brian D., compiler, *Benjamin C. Stucky & Veronika (Goering) Stucky Genealogy 1844-1991.* Goessel, KS: Published by compiler, 1991. Pp. 390. $25. Order from: Compiler, Box 177, Goessel, KS 67053.

Stucky, Nancy (Voth), compiler, *Isaac Fast Genealogy 1859-1994.* Goessel, KS: Published by compiler, 1994. Pp. 47. $8. Order from: Brian and Nancy Stucky, Box 177, Goessel, KS 67053.

Yerger, Anna Bomberger, *Jacob H. Bomberger Family Tree.* 1988. Pp. 5. Order from: Alice S. Snyder, 301 E. 2nd Ave., Lititz, PA 17543.

Further information on these books may be obtained from the Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.

community, institutionalizing mutual aid and church membership are explored.

Twentieth-century agrarian Mennonite communities in Germany, Paraguay and Canada (including the Old Order Mennonites of Ontario) are described. The "Tod/Not/Brot" progression—the first generation faced "death," the second suffered "privation" and the third had "bread"—seemed to be a common element of many Mennonite colonies or settlements. World War II and post-war economic opportunities led to the breakdown of rural economic separatism, especially in North America. As Mennonites became urbanized, their involvement in business and professions also increased so that now a majority of Mennonites are white-collar workers. The authors describe Mennonite businesses in Winnipeg which are 75 percent family based.

The essays describe conflicts between the communal ethic and individual entrepreneurship. For example, Mennonite women have been taught that work values of diligence are more important than creativity, and that success is defined in terms of service rather than financial rewards.

A study of Mennonites in Ontario shows that Mennonites do not have greater financial success than the general population. They do not pursue financial returns as aggressively as the overall Ontario society does. Various Christian principles such as avoidance of conflict, a strong belief in tithing and avoidance of certain lucrative professions are cited as possible explanations. However, the study of Kauffman and Harder indicated the average income of Mennonites in North America is 12 percent higher than the national average.

The work ethic of Mennonites is explored. Mennonites worked very hard in exchange for the right to exist, physically, religiously and socially (the survival epoch).

In 1990 Calvin Redekop planned a major conference on Anabaptist Mennonite faith and economics at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ontario. Credit: Pearl Schrock Photo Collections, Archives of the Mennonite Historical Society.

Having achieved toleration, they shifted their work to establish their religiously based community (the community building epoch). In the third stage, their work focused more on achieving symbolic status in the dominant social structure (the entrepreneurial stage). The last stage is also characterized by a predominance of individualism. Today we may have several of these stages represented in the same community, such as the Hutterites and Old Order Amish vs. Mennonites. Probably many Anabaptist groups represent combinations of these stages.

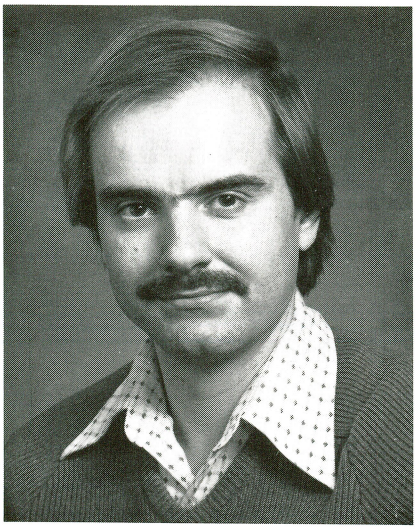
The book concludes with several mind-expanding essays which ask many questions related to economics, justice, charity and Anabaptist theology. J. Lawrence Burkholder traces the evolution of Anabaptist attitudes toward economic life from a strong emphasis on discipleship and separation to the present involvement which requires a redefinition of discipleship to reduce the tension between the historical Christ and the economic reality experienced by many Mennonite entrepreneurs.

Agencies such as MEDA and the Mennonite credit unions are cited as modern-day institutions which help Mennonite entrepreneurs practice their Christianity and mutual sharing theology. Finally, he lists 14 suggestions for Christian entrepreneurs whose primary purpose in business is to help other people.

This book is a very comprehensive summary of both the historical and modern-day faith and economics issues from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective. It is challenging, mind-expanding and should be of great interest to a majority of present-day Mennonites and other Christians.

—Daniel J. Miller is a physician with East Holmes Family Care of Walnut Creek, Ohio.

Samuel Steiner is archivist for the Mennonite Archives of Ontario, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, and secretary of the Mennonite Church Historical Committee.



Guides to Amish and Mennonites: Four Approaches

by Troy David Osborne

Real People: Amish and Mennonites in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Martha A. Denlinger. Scottdale: Herald Press, Revised in 1993. pp. 96. $4.95.

Mennonites in Ontario, Marlene Epp. Waterloo: The Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario, 1994. pp. 43. $6. Can.

Mennonites in Iowa, Melvin Gingerich. Kalona: Mennonite Historical Society of Iowa, 1974, Reprinted in 1992. pp. 48. $3.

Our People: The Amish and Mennonites of Ohio, Levi Miller. Scottdale: Herald Press, revised in 1992. pp. 64. $4.95.

Melvin Gingerich (1902-1975), on left, at the dedication of Iowa Mennonite Museum and Archives, June 10, 1973. He wrote the definitive history of Iowa Mennonites and served many years as director of the Mennonite Church Archives. Credit: Melvin Gingerich Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

Various authors have attempted to formulate definitions of the Mennonites and the Amish as the two groups continue to draw attention from a society which is growing increasingly curious about the distinct lifestyle of the Old Orders and the service activities of the `mainline' groups.

These four booklets are revisions, reprints, or replacements of earlier works. They have been written for an audience which has limited knowledge about the two Anabaptist groups, and therefore they deal mostly with tourist types of questions. But they can also be of interest to those with a good background on these groups.

As someone who recently worked as an interpreter of Anabaptism to tourists in Shipshewana, Indiana, I understand how hard it can be to communicate Mennonite and Amish beliefs and lifestyles to an uninformed audience without resorting to oversimplifications and half-truths. The beliefs and lifestyles within the two groups are so varied, that the audience can at times be disappointed that the interpreter has not presented them with a concise description. These four authors have done a commendable job of facing that challenge and presenting their interpretations.

Real People is in its fourth printing, and it is the most in-depth of the four books. Not only did Martha Denlinger cover much of Mennonite and Amish life, but her descriptions are the most detailed of the four books. The chapters look in great depth at aspects of Amish and Mennonite life from weddings and funerals to missions and education. Rather than simply describing the various characteristics, Denlinger also provided the reason, either scriptural or sociological, for that trait.

Denlinger's book is organized around 12 chapters and reads a bit a like a textbook. Because Denlinger wrote about a smaller geographic area than the other three books, it was probably a bit easier for her to offer descriptions which are accurate without having to worry about missing some aspect of Mennonites and Amish in her region.

On the other hand, Marlene Epp faced the task of writing about the largest geographic region of the four books and also had to cover the widest variety of Mennonites. Within Ontario, the spectrum of Mennonites runs from Old Colony immigrants from Mexico and Old Order Mennonites to urban Mennonites. Without resorting to oversimplifications, *Mennonites in Ontario* paints a rich portrait of Mennonites within the province.

Because of the wide scope which she covered, Epp could not go into the depth of description which Denlinger did in her booklet. Nevertheless, *Mennonites in Ontario* discusses many questions which are of interest to those who desire a definition Mennonite identity. Epp realizes that sometimes there is confusion about whether `Mennonite' is a religious or ethnic description. She does not pick one description over the other, but she embraces both.

Epp is forthright in admitting that Mennonite lifestyle is not as separate from the world as it has been in the past. I know tourists sometimes discount mainline Mennonites as irrelevant, because our lifestyle is not as unique as that of the Old Orders. Epp suggests that it is their theology and emphases on service, peace and justice which separate modern Mennonites from the world.

Epp does an excellent job of holding up each of the unique groups of Mennonites in Ontario as having an authentic Mennonite identity.

Mennonites in Iowa targets a different audience than the other three booklets. Gingerich begins his book with a background on early Anabaptist history in Europe and then described some of the contemporary beliefs and customs of Mennonites in Iowa. However, the bulk of the book focuses on the history of Mennonites in the four main areas of Iowa. Information contained with each section ranges from the history of individual congregations to the predominant family names of that area to stories of Mennonites from Iowa who later became church leaders.

Because it does not go into detail about lifestyles such as Amish weddings or buggies, the information will not be the sort which interests someone who is looking for an introduction to Amish and Mennonite life. However, it could prove invaluable to individuals who are descended from Mennonites in Iowa or who want to do research on the state's Mennonites or Amish.

The book is still in its original 1972 text with a one-page "brief update" at the end. While reading the booklet, I wondered why the text has not been updated. On page 12, for example, Gingerich wrote that in contrast with General Conference Mennonites, "Old" Mennonite women wear the "prayer veil." The status of the prayer veil has certainly changed within the past 22 years; that is a fact worth pointing out. However, situations like that can be overlooked given the abundance of historical information which Gingerich packs into his text.

Like the booklet by Gingerich, *Our People,* by Levi Miller, also includes descriptions of the individual counties where Anabaptists have settled in Ohio. But unlike the former, Miller does not make history the focus of his book. Instead, Miller's easy-to-read text is well suited for an audience which wants to have some of the basic questions of Amish and Mennonite lifestyles answered.

The title comes from the Pennsylvania German phrase *unser Leut*, which is used by the Amish to refer to themselves. Miller uses the English translation of 'our people' throughout the book to refer to both Mennonites and Amish.

Written in an easy-flowing and very personal style, the booklet gives readers a good background on Amish and Mennonite lifestyle and beliefs without overloading them with information. Miller explains the beliefs which produced customs and practices, which is more helpful than simply listing them.

One aspect of Miller's booklet which I especially appreciated is the author's attempt to let the reader understand the way Mennonites have struggled with acculturation. It is an aspect of Mennonite life which is often hard for us to convey to those not raised in our tradition.

Like the Epp booklet, *Our People* does not romanticize the Old Order groups. Miller takes great care to point out the weaknesses as well as the strengths of certain aspects of Mennonite and Amish life, such as the fact that strong emphasis on family ties can appear to make the Amish and Mennonites solely an ethnic group.

As it defines Mennonites and Amish to an audience which is uninformed about the basic attributes of Amish and Mennonite life, Miller's simple yet honest text grapples with some of the basic questions of self-identity which concern the wider Mennonite body of believers.

It was clear to me that all of the authors care deeply about their subjects. As other Mennonites continue to dialogue with tourists about who we are, we may find that, like the authors, we define ourselves by our ideals. At the same time, we must be aware of instances when the ideal and real do not meet. Individuals who are interested in questions of Mennonite identity would find these books interesting starting points.

—Troy David Osborne, Hesston, Kan., is a recent graduate of Goshen College with degrees in history and religion. He spent last summer as a guide at Menno-Hof, Shipshewana, Ind.

News and Notes

Wilmer D. Swope of Leetonia, Ohio, has resigned as the chair of the Historical Committee of the Ohio Mennonite Conference. Kenneth Nisly of North Canton, Ohio, has been named the new chair. Swope's involvement in Ohio Mennonite history began when J. C. Wenger asked him to write an article for the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* in 1947. Since then he has contributed many articles to the *Bulletin*. Swope contributed the "List of Congregations," "List of Ministers," Appendices, Index, and photographs for *Mennonites of the Ohio and Eastern Conference from the Colonial Period in Pennsylvania to 1969*. The book was written by Grant M. Stoltzfus and published by Herald Press.

The fall program of the **Casselman River Area Amish and Mennonite Historians,** is focusing on the European immigrant **Peter Bitschi** and his descendants. It is scheduled for September 15 and 16, 1995, at Grantsville, Maryland. Anyone with information or interest in the Beachy/Peachey family is invited to contact Ada (Beachy) Maust, secretary of the planning committee, at Route 1, Box 293, Salisbury, PA 15558. Telephone: 814 662-2866.

The Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society has published *Proceedings* of the Conference Tradition and Transition: An Amish Mennonite Heritage of Obedience, 1693-1993. This conference was sponsored by IMHGS, the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, and the General Conference Mennonite Church Historical Committee. Presentations addressed issues throughout the 300 years of Amish history, with special emphasis on processes leading to the incorporation of Amish congregations and individuals into modern Mennonite bodies. Together, these papers, presentations, and dramas expand our knowledge of Amish development and forcefully illuminate the enormous Amish contribution to modern

Curator Louise Stoltzfus** holds Barbara Ebersol's crutches and personal Ausbund while discussing plans for an exhibition featuring the work and story of the 19th century Amish folk artists, Barbara Ebersol and Henry Lapp. Exhibit designer Kenny Pellman holds a Henry Lapp watercolor painting and spoon box. The exhibition—**"Two Amish Folk Artists and Quilts from Their Area"—opens in The People's Place Quilt Museum, Intercourse, Pennsylvania, on Friday, March 17 and continues through October 31, 1995.*

Mennonite denominations. This 240-page volume includes scripts to the dramatic presentations and guided tour as well as the texts of papers presented. To obtain copies, send $11.35 (or $11.98 for Illinois residents) to Gordon Oyer, 110 Flora Drive, Champaign, IL 61821.

The manuscript of the **Mennonites in Canada, 1940-70** (Volume III) was received by the board of the **Mennonite Historical Society of Canada** at its December 3, 1994, meeting at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario. It was written by Ted Regehr, professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. The first two volumes were written by Frank H. Epp and published in 1974 and 1982. This third volume is to be published by University of Toronto Press. Other projects considered by the society included looking at a binational conference with American Mennonites and doing a search for women's archival collections. Orders can be placed with Ted E. Friesen, president of the society, at PO Box 720, Altona, MB, Canada, R0G 0B0.

Conrad Grebel College is the recipient of a well-known oil painting by Agatha Schmidt, entitled *Exodus II.* The painting has come to symbolize the grueling "Great Trek" of German-speaking refugees who fled the Soviet Union in 1943. "Exodus II" has been reproduced many times. An earlier rendition appeared in Frank Epp's book, *Mennonite Exodus,* published in 1962, which chronicles the Russian Mennonite migrations of the past century. Associate Archivist Reg Good comments that although Mennonites may not have official icons, this painting is cherished by many as a window into the Russian Mennonite Odyssey. "We are grateful," he said, "for the opportunity to preserve a painting which has become a part of our collective consciousness."

A Swiss Mennonite Heritage Tour will be directed by Delbert L. Gratz, Bluffton, Ohio, June 12-July 3, 1995. It will include visits to a number of areas in Switzerland, Alsace, Lorraine, and the Palatinate where Swiss Mennonites have lived. The registration deadline is April 13, 1995, or at such time when the limit of 30 persons is reached. For more information contact: Delbert L. Gratz, 8990 Augsburger Rd., Bluffton, Ohio 45817-9513 or Dede Lovell, Menno Travel Service, 210 South Main Street, Goshen, IN 46526-3723. Telephone: 219 534-1521 or 800 635-0963.

A video entitled **The Architecture of Goshen College, 1995** was shown at Goshen College on October 1, 1994, as another part of its ongoing centennial celebrations. The video traced the campus architecture from its early classical forms to its present contemporary design. A traditional symmetry is seen in the Administra-

tion Building (1903), a modern simplistic style is represented by the Union Building (1947), and a contemporary informal style is expressed by the architecture of the Roman Gingerich Recreation-Fitness Center (1994). The script was written by Linda Nelson Keane who is an associate professor of architecture from the Art Institute of Chicago. The project was directed by Abner H. Hershberger, Art Department, and was by produced by Bill Frisbie, Instructional Materials Center at Goshen College.

Mennonite Central Committee released its 75th anniversary video entitled **Through New Eyes** (1995). It tells the story of service in five segments. In the 1920s, North American Mennonites worked together to help suffering Mennonites in Russia. Peace work, worldwide relief efforts, and an expanded administrative structure grew out of World War II. The Teachers' Abroad Program in Africa reflected the shift away from relief and showed that people rather than dollars or training were one of MCC's best resources. The work in Vietnam forced workers to reexamine the political and economic implications of the gospel, and in Central America, MCC personnel learned that walking with suffering churches was a crucial witness. The video was produced by Ron Byler, Philadelphia. It is 23 minutes in length and is in color, VHS format. Available from Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.

A **Mutual Aid Conference** is being planned for January 26-28, 1996, at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana. Presenters are already preparing papers for this conference and are meeting in Elkhart this summer. This project is being sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary, 1945-1995. Address is 1110 N. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526. The cosponsor is the Institute of Mennonite Studies, c/o Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, IN 46517-1999.

The Brethren in Christ Historical Society will hold its annual meeting on June 24, 1995, at the Ringgold and Air House meetinghouses, Ringgold, Maryland. The theme of the meeting will be life in the Franklin County Brethren in Christ churches. The meeting will include storytelling, a slide presentation, and a love feast. All interested persons—members or nonmembers—are invited. For more information, write or call the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, Grantham, PA 17027, 717 691-6048, or Avery and Eunice Zook, 6080 Cumberland Highway, Chambersburg, PA 17201, 717 264-1580.

The spring meeting of the **Eastern Mennonite Associated Libraries and Archives (EMALA)** will be held on Saturday, April 22, 1995, at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society Library. The meeting will focus on the most frequently used genealogical research tools. For more information call Ray K. Hacker at 717 569-3460.

Watch for Historical Committee activity at Wichita '95. James C. Juhnke will speak at the Mennonite Church Historical Association dinner. Juhnke will feature Ed G. Kaufman (1891-1980), General Conference Mennonite missionary, college president, and churchman. Juhnke is the author of Creative Crusader: Edmund G. Kaufman and Mennonite Community, published by Bethel College in 1994. Also look for the Historical Committee display.

Correction: The essay which won third place in Class II of the John Horsch Mennonite History Contest was entitled "A Brief History of Forty Years of MCC Involvement in Vietnam 1954-**1994**."

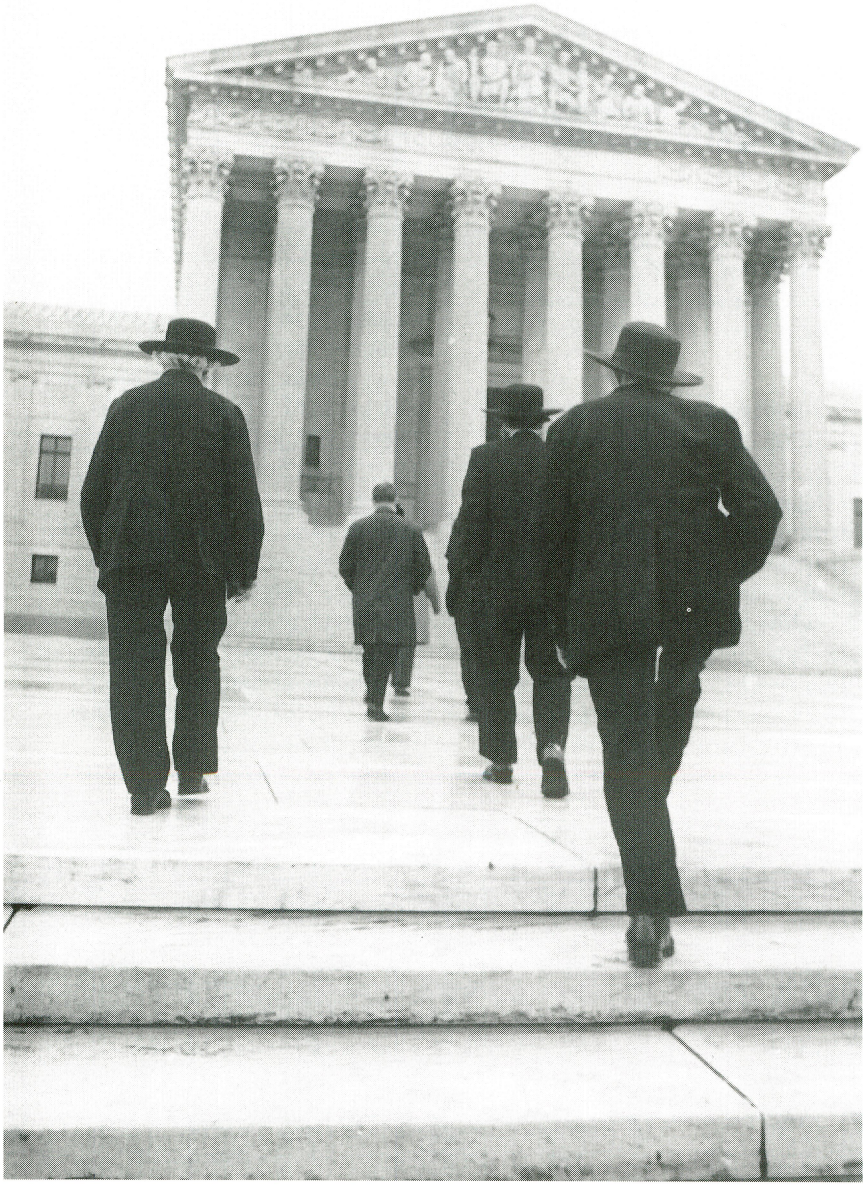
Mennonite Historical Bulletin
Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church
1700 South Main Street
Goshen, IN 46526
Telephone 219 535-7477
Forward and Address Correction Requested

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Scottdale, Pa
Permit No. 3

MENNONITE
Historical Bulletin
Vol. LVI July 1995 ISSN 0025-9357 No. 3

Amish Mennonites and the U.S. Supreme Court: 110 Years Before *Yoder*

by Steve Nolt



Amishmen enter the U.S. Supreme Court building during the landmark 1972 Wisconsin v. Yoder case. Credit: Wide World Photos.

In 1972 public attention focused on the Amish as never before. That year the church well known for separation from the world found itself in the very halls of American political power—the United States Supreme Court. As defendants in the landmark case *Wisconsin v. Yoder,* the Amish heard the Court consider, and then grant, the legality of Amish schools.

In the near-quarter century since then, the *Yoder* ruling has continued to attract public notice and academic comment. Judges have cited the ruling in hundreds of other legal decisions. Subsequently, Amish persons appeared as parties in two other Supreme Court cases, though neither attracted the same popular interest as the school judgment. At the time, some observers thought *Yoder* represented the first Amish foray into the courtroom, although more knowledgeable parties knew that educational concerns had brought the Amish and the judiciary together as early as 1914.

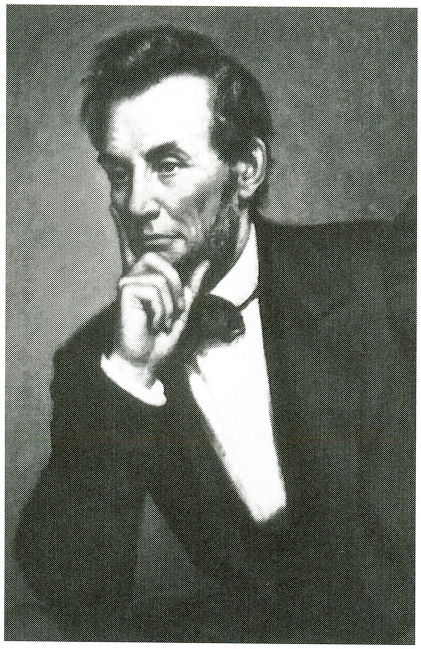
In fact, one hundred and ten years before *Wisconsin v. Yoder,* Supreme Court justices heard a case brought to them by two Amish Mennonite brothers, Peter and Christian Farni, of Woodford County, Ill. That case was almost certainly the earliest encounter between the high bench and any of the nation's Amish or Mennonite residents. Although the case, *Farni v. Tesson,* did not involve dicey issues of religious freedom or

command national attention, it provides one window into the world of early Amish Mennonite activity in the judicial world. More importantly, its records provide important insights into the economic life of a frontier Amish Mennonite community.

Background

In 1830 the first Amish Mennonites settled along the Illinois River near Fort Clark (now Peoria). Within several years, a sizable Amish Mennonite community grew up in what became Woodford, Tazewell, and McLean Counties, with related settlements in adjacent Livingston and Bureau Counties. By 1834 families had taken up land along the Mackinaw River, a Illinois tributary. The household of Christian Farni (1800-1882) was likely the first to arrive there, though other families soon joined them—including that of Christian's brother, Peter (1797-1873). Natives of the Lorraine, France, the brothers had each sojourned in Pennsylvania and Ontario before moving to Illinois.

Both men played prominent roles in their new Midwestern home, providing both spiritual and economic leadership in community life. Peter was an Amish elder (bishop), and Christian, a minister. Moreover, the two were noted entrepreneurs and agriculturalists. Shortly after moving to the banks of the Mackinaw, they opened a sawmill, to which



Young Springfield attorney Abraham Lincoln represented the Farni brothers in at least one court appearance. Credit: US News and World Report, 200 Years: A Bicentennial Illustrated History of the United States, 1973.

they later added equipment for grinding corn and grain. Meanwhile, Christian (and to a lesser degree, Peter) built up a major farming operation. Indeed, the crossroads village which grew up around the Farni's southern Woodford County mill and homesteads came to be known as "Farnisville." Along with Slabtown, the village on the Mackinaw's opposite bank, Farnisville grew into a rural commercial center.

During the 1840s and '50s, Midwestern American agriculture underwent an important shift from subsistence farming to cash cropping. The Farnis' grist mill catered to this emerging trend. Meanwhile, frontier communities inevitably developed ties with regional metropolitan centers such as St. Louis and Chicago. Although apparently secluded from the wider commercial world, rural villages were often closely bound to such "central cities" through contracts, mortgages, and trade routes.

Given these developments, it was hardly surprising that in the mid 1850s two St. Louis-based, French-born investors approached the Farni brothers with a scheme to draw the economic bonds between frontier farmers and the metropolitan marketplace more tightly. The businessmen, Charles de Boutcam and Paul Carrey, suggested building a distillery, which, in cooperation with the Farni grist mill, would produce whiskey from local grain for market in St. Louis. The two Frenchmen promised a large inheritance from Europe to support the venture, but needed some local money to get things started. The Farnis agreed to back the plan, and a sizable "brick and frame steam-distillery" rose along the Mackinaw. Apparently the firm operated quite profitably, at first. In only two years, the distillery did $50,000 worth of business.

The ***Mennonite Historical Bulletin*** is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Church Historical Association.

Editor: John E. Sharp; **Review editor:** Steven D. Reschly; **Designer:** Julie Kauffman. **Contributing editors:** J. Robert Charles, Sandra Cronk, Marlene Epp, Reg Good, Rachel Waltner Goossen, Leonard Gross, Amos B. Hoover, Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Russell Krabill, Glenn M. Lehman, Joseph Liechty, Joseph Miller, Levi Miller, Steven Nolt, Erv Schlabach, Jonathan Showalter, Mary Sprunger, Dennis Stoesz, Gerald Studer, Wilmer Swope, Marilyn Helmuth Voran, Frank Yoder.

Historical Committee: Beulah Stauffer Hostetler, Gerald Hudson, Arlin D. Lapp, Hope Kauffman Lind, Steven D. Reschly (chair), John D. Roth, Kimberly Schmidt, Samuel J. Steiner, Carolyn C. Wenger.

Dues for subscription-membership in the Mennonite Church Historical Association ($20 annual), inquiries, articles, or news items should be sent to the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526. Telephone 219 535-7477, fax 219 535-7660.

Microfilms of Volumes I-L of the ***Mennonite Historical Bulletin*** are available from: University Microfilms, Inc., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Nevertheless, trouble loomed. The French inheritance never materialized, though the Farnis continued to hope it would. Actually, things were much worse than the brothers realized. The two Frenchmen had borrowed far beyond their means and experienced chronic shortages of cash. The Panic of 1857, which struck suddenly in the fall of that year, caused the distillery business to collapse. It also uncovered the many financial ties which bound the lives of hinterland residents and St. Louis interests.

A Legal Maze

As the distillery's urban creditors tried to foreclose, the Frenchmen persuaded the Farnis to post a $17,000 penal bond to forestall proceedings, while they appealed to the court for more mercy and time. The Farnis again agreed, but soon discovered that de Boutcam and Carrey had fled the country leaving the brothers holding the debt-ridden distillery, and saddled with apending bond due to five parties.

In the fall of 1858, one of the distillery's creditors, St. Louis banker Edward P. Tesson, bought the distillery for a fraction of its value at a Woodford County sheriff sale. The Farnis now had no assets—only liabilities—from the failed enterprise. Tesson wasted no time in trying to recover those debts. In December of that year he sued the Farnis in federal circuit court for debt of $17,000 and damages amounting to $10,000.

The Farnis now found themselves looking for other metropolitan contacts—this time in the form of legal help. The two worked mostly with Samuel W. Fuller, a Chicago attorney who represented them through most of the litigious maze. At one point Christian Farni apparently also consulted Springfield, Ill., lawyer Abraham Lincoln. Although his work for them was rather limited, Lincoln did make at least one appearance on their behalf.

The trial proceeded quickly. In June 1859 the federal jury ruled against the brothers, awarding Tesson the debt he sought, as well as $7,394.92 in damages. The Farnis, however, were not about to give up so easily. They had not exhausted their legal options. They decided to appeal the ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court on a writ of error—that is, they did not contend the facts of the case, but rather the manner in which it was heard. They claimed that the case lacked federal jurisdiction, and that it really belonged in state court. If the Farnis owed anything, they argued, they owed it to all the parties named in their original penal bond, including an Illinois resident. The appeal process took a year and a half.

Woodford County courthouse, Metamora, Illinois, Credit: C. Henry Smith Photograph Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.

By December 1861, the high court was finally ready to hear the Farnis' arguments. In addition, the justices reviewed 138 pages of briefs filed by lawyers for both sides, along with documents from the lower courts. The opinion, issued the following spring and written by Justice Robert C. Grier, sided with the Amish Mennonite parties. The justice scolded Tesson for stripping the other bond holders' names from his suit so as to improperly claim federal jurisdiction and receive the entire award.

Yet the Farnis' troubles were far from over. Although the court had ruled in their favor, the brothers had simply won the right to be tried again in state court. Tesson immediately refiled his claim, this time including the other parties named in the bond, in Woodford County Circuit Court. But the case was not heard until December 1867. At that point, the jury sided with the Farnis, so the plaintiffs filed a writ of error to the Illinois State Supreme Court. That bench eventually agreed with them, and in June 1870, sent the case back to the lower court to be reconsidered. The case languished on the Woodford County docket until 1873, when its venue changed in Peoria. The final ruling came in October 1878 in favor of the creditors for the sum of $17,000 in debt and $17,000 in damages.

By then, however, Peter Farni and one of the creditors were dead, Christian had moved to Kansas, and Tesson was bankrupt himself. It is unclear how the tangled judgment was ever resolved.

Summary

The case itself provides a number of curious illustrations of Amish Mennonites and 19th-century litigation. On the one hand, the Farnis played a much more aggressive and assertive role in fighting a suit than many observers might expect from Amish Mennonites living in a milieu of nineteenth-century nonresistant piety and humility theology.

On the other hand, when the brothers appeared in court "in their own proper person," they did follow traditional Anabaptist dictates in affirming the truth, rather than swearing oaths. Perhaps most sur-

prising to some, the Farnis seem to have received no official censure from their church. In fact, they continued functioning as local, and even national church leaders during their courtroom activities. In 1864 Christian attended the annual Amish Mennonite *Diener-Versammlung* in Goshen, Indiana. The meeting records no objection to his presence nor any comment on his recently concluded Supreme Court entanglements or his pending state trial.

Interesting as these insights into Amish Mennonite attitudes and actions are, the legal documents which survive from these cases provide more important source data in the form of rare information on the economic activities and connections of 19th-century Amish Mennonite frontier settlements. The surviving paperwork helps illustrate the degree to which rural Amish Mennonite communities were involved in broader midwestern patterns linking frontier economies and regional metropolitan centers.

A more detailed account of the Farnis' entrepreneurial activities and Farnisville connections to the wider commercial world will appear, with documentation, in future issues of Illinois Mennonite Heritage, the periodical of the Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society.

Steve Nolt lives in South Bend, Ind., where he is studying American history at the University of Notre Dame.

Conferences and Congregations: A Review of Mennonite Church Polity

by James M. Lapp

General Secretary of the Mennonite Church

Introduction

I found the task of reviewing the polity of the Mennonite Church regarding conference-congregation relationships to be no small challenge. As I prepared this address, I became aware again of the temptation to read contemporary perspectives and concerns into our history. I noted that some people read our journey as a church in terms of its abuses of authority, while others discover confirmations of a legitimate tradition. Interpretation of the role and function of conferences varies depending on what one is looking for. In the *Mennonite Encyclopedia,* Rod Sawatsky wrote:

> Authority . . . is a problem for Mennonites, not only on the larger theological level, but also on the operational level. Operationally, among Mennonites, authority is sometimes identified but more frequently is not identified; it is sometimes formulated, but typically only implied. The discussion of Mennonite understandings of authority . . . is largely a matter of identifying the implied. (Vol. 5, p. 45)

Leonard Gross has suggested that distinctly different traditions of leadership and authority emerged from the Dutch Mennonites and the Swiss/South German Mennonites from whom the conferences represented here have their primary origin. He suggested that this difference is symbolized by the repeated reference to Matthew 18 in the Schleitheim Confession [Swiss/South German] (centering discipline in the congregation), and the appeal to 1 Corinthians 5 in the Dordrecht Confession of 1632 [Dutch] (which emphasized the authority of church leaders).

Current integration discussions with the General Conference Mennonite Church highlight the congregationalism in the General Conference tradition in contrast to the MC pattern. The anomaly is that the descendants of the Schleitheim Confession are now characterized (or caricatured) as those with more tendencies toward authoritarian leaders and the descendants of the Dutch Mennonites as more democratic and congregational.

I speak, not as a scholar, but as one nurtured in the womb of the church and schooled from childhood in the ambiguities of polity. My father, whose parenting and memory I cherish, was feared by some of my contemporaries due to his authority as bishop and conference moderator for many years. I also speak as one who has visited all the conferences in an attempt to listen to their issues.

Three particular points of interest should be noted at the outset of this review. First, the history of conferences in the Mennonite Church date from 1725 (Franconia) to 1979 (Gulf States), if we do not take into account conferences which reorganized in recent years due to integration with the GCMC. In 1994 the General Board formally recognized and received the convention of churches in Puerto Rico as a new conference in the Mennonite Church. It is interesting to note that six conferences have been formed since 1960. While their experience differs from that of the older conferences, in many cases their roots and nucleus of leaders have some origin in older conferences in the East.

Mennonite General Conference, Belleville Amish Mennonite Meetinghouse, 1927. Credit: John Sharp

A second issue which cannot be overlooked is that several of our larger conferences in the Midwest have strong influences from an Amish Mennonite heritage. Specific polity differences were blended in these conferences between greater congregational autonomy among the Amish Mennonites and the stronger role of conference for Mennonites.

Third, this address focuses largely on structural considerations. It is important to affirm that our structures for authority and church order are rooted in the confidence of Christ's presence in the body to guide and empower the community in decision making and living out the will of God. The Scriptures provide the authoritative word, as interpreted by the Spirit in the community of faith, for leaders and people. This point dare not be overlooked lest we succumb to mere human strivings devoid of the transcendent presence of God in the working out of our polity.

Emergence of Conferences, 1527-1880

It is commonly stated that the first conference among the Anabaptists took place at Schleitheim, Switzerland, February 24, 1527. A group of leaders met and drafted seven articles on which the Anabaptists differed from the Protestant reformers. These seven articles were developed in the local Anabaptist congregations, according to Leonard Gross.

The statement assumes many central doctrines—God, Bible, justification by faith—and focuses on matters of ethics and order in the church. *The Brotherly Union* circulated widely in Europe, influencing members of the Anabaptist movement and causing other reformers to write responses. Other conferences occurred in Europe in the early years of the Anabaptist movement where leaders reviewed issues of faith, strategized for mission, attempted to develop unity among divergent parties, and tried to maintain order in the church.

The first conference in America took place at Germantown in 1725 where early Pennsylvania settlers met and adopted the Dordrecht Confession of 1632. Apparently the group was experiencing challenges to their beliefs and identity and needed to define a statement of faith that could be circulated among English-speaking colonists, according to Beulah Hostetler in *American Mennonites and Protestant Movements.* During this same era the leaders of the two oldest Pennsylvania settlements began to meet to confer on issues of common concern which eventually gave rise to the Franconia and Lancaster Conferences. In the 19th century, other conferences emerged in Ontario, Virginia, Western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri-Iowa, and Kansas-Nebraska.

The early conferences of Mennonites were meetings of leaders from autonomous or semiautonomous congregations. The communities reflected close-knit sectarian characteristics, guided by unwritten understandings of faith and practice with authority expressed through leaders who were called out of the congregations. Without external threats or internal calls for change, conferences needed no formalized procedures or elaborate structures of authority.

One threat emerged in Franconia in the 1840s when a minister named John Oberholtzer wished to develop a new authority structure for congregations. Among the issues which precipitated the crisis was Oberholtzer's refusal to wear the plain coat normally worn by ministers, his desire for minutes of the conference sessions to be kept in writing, and his call for development of a constitution for the conference body. Oberholtzer's vision also included ministerial training, Sunday schools, missionary activities, and publishing materials for congregational nurture.

When Oberholtzer pressed for these innovations, a division ocurred in 1847 involving 16 ministers and deacons and one-fourth of the Franconia membership. The presenting issues appear to be a conflict between traditional and innovative ways of being the church. Decades later most of Oberholtzer's ideas were common practice in the Mennonite Church.

Was it merely pioneer thinking versus closed-minded and unchang-

ing leadership? Perhaps. But Beulah Hostetler suggests the critical issue was the nature of authority in the church. Oberholtzer claimed only to recognize the authority of Scripture. None of the issues he pressed for were prohibited by Scripture. But conference leaders believed that it was the Scriptures as interpreted by the church and expressed in certain practices which was most important to the spiritual health of God's people. They saw Oberholtzer disregarding the authority of the church. They feared that keeping minutes and preparing a constitution would undercut the congregationally-based discipline of Matthew 18, and could possibly place human patterns over Scripture.

This 1847 schism in Franconia probably says less about the character of the modern General Conference Mennonite Church than it does about a fundamental issue faced by our conferences in the 1990s. The foundational problem which our conferences still face is not the authority of Scripture, which is generally upheld in our church. The key issue is who interprets the Scripture. Which understanding of the Scripture do we follow? What do we do when congregations and members do not agree on scriptural interpretation? And what is the role of conferences in addressing these questions?

Mennonite General Conference, Kalona, Iowa, in 1941. Credit: Mennonite General Conference Photograph Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.

Consolidation of Conference Authority, 1881-1962

Mennonites in North America experienced many changes in the 19th century. Gradually John Oberholtzer's ideas seemed more appealing. Another way of saying it is that the trend was to replace the informal unwritten sanctions of the church with more formal written codes. By 1881 Lancaster Conference developed a document entitled "Rules and Discipline" which grew from 27 items and 1,481 words in 1881 to 57 items and 4,677 words in 1968 when the last such statement was adopted by the conference. Leonard Gross says most of the conferences adopted some version of a discipline during this era, along with organizational constitutions to guide the corporate life of the church.

Among the forces which fed this process were the decline of a sectarian consciousness among Mennonites, the zeal for organizational and institutional development, the fundamentalist-modernist struggles around the turn of the century, and the thrust of modernity with new ideas and technology which created a need for sharpening the boundaries of the church.

Conferences took the lead in working at these matters. The bishops promoted the noble ideal of a pure church which could and should be maintained through clear expressions of discipline. The definitions of faith and practice were developed by leaders and, at least in some conferences, the rules and discipline were presented to the congregations for their approval.

The Amish Mennonite conferences retained a strong consultative relationship with their congregations. In the eastern conferences, the rules and discipline were read through in their entirety in a council meeting or preparatory meeting before the annual or semiannual communion service. Members were regularly expected to declare their confession of peace with God and each other, along with a willingness to abide by the explicit discipline of the church. Practical matters, such as dress, entertainment, insurance, radio/TV ownership, and Sunday observance, were addressed in these statements of discipline.

Some of us can remember this era with its more authoritative leaders and the sincere desire for a people nonconformed to the world and devoted to the simple faith of Jesus Christ. Some call the early to mid-20th century a doctrinal era with a more rational approach to faith.

While some members were excommunicated for failure to live up to definitions of faith and practice in their conference, others left voluntarily to join other denominations or to form new congregations. In some conference settings today, there are General Conference Mennonite Church congregations which were developed by Mennonites who wished for a more

relaxed way to live out their faith. In some communities, independent congregations were formed by dissatisfied Mennonites. Over the years some congregations were reprimanded by the bishop for practices out of line with the conference expectations, such as special music in the church and Sunday school. In a few instances, whole congregations were excommunicated when their deviances seemed too pronounced. More common was a division in a congregation or withdrawal by those desiring a more conservative or more progressive practice of faith. In the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, H. S. Bender says of Mennonite schisms, "none was due to a major issue in doctrine, all being due primarily to differences between progressive and conservative attitudes in church work or strictness in discipline or to miscellaneous and personal difficulties" (Vol. 3, p. 612).

A primary force shaping conferences during this era was the formation of the Mennonite General Conference in 1898. This structure provided a forum for the conferences to work together at common concerns and symbolized the beginning of the Mennonite Church as a denomination. While four conferences never formally joined the Mennonite General Conference, the provision was made for the bishops of these nonmember conferences to be ex officio delegates to the General Conference.

While formally General Conference remained advisory to the area conferences, strong voices called for uniformity among the conferences. As an expression of this, in 1914 the General Conference published a revised and expanded edition of Daniel Kauffman's *Manual of Bible Doctrine,* which gained broad acceptance and contributed strongly to greater uniformity among the conferences. To challenge Kauffman's *Bible Doctrine* became more and more like challenging the authority of scripture. The Mennonite General Conference created a dress committee in 1911 to bring "all our people to the Gospel standard of simplicity and spirituality." While the authority of the Mennonite General Conference was formally weak, its influence was powerful in matters of faith and practice among the conferences.

In the late 1930s, Illinois Conference heard rumors that the Mennonite General Conference was threatening their membership due to their more progressive practices. They were reassured in a letter from the General Conference in 1939. In 1943 the General Problems Committee brought a report concerning the lack of uniform adherence to accepted Mennonite practices of nonconformity among the conferences. An action was proposed that should any conference decide not to work in harmony with General Conference standards, they would forfeit their place in the General Conference.

This action was tabled and a special session of General Conference called in 1944 to look at this proposal. After much time in prayer, an action was taken in 1944 to visit conferences which did not keep the standards of the Mennonite General Conference with a view toward reconciliation and a desire to avoid any forfeiture of membership by conferences. Clearly the General Conference chose not to press its authority and bent every effort toward healing and unity. It is this conciliatory spirit which has largely characterized both our denomination and our area conferences over the years (to the disappointment of some members).

Redefinition of Conference, 1963-1994

By the 1960s, the authority of conferences had waned in the Mennonite Church. Rules and discipline were quickly set aside in favor of more flexible approaches to discipleship. I was present at the 1965 fall session of the Franconia Conference when there was not sufficient support to reaffirm the current discipline or to approve a revised discipline. As a result, in one day, a long era of conference discipline ended. In 1981, 100 years after the development of the first such statement, the Lancaster Conference made acceptance of the rules and discipline optional. In the 1990s, we have a generation of members and pastors for whom conference discipline is a distant memory or unknown part of our history.

Many factors contributed to this rapid loss of authority by conferences and church leaders. World War II and subsequent wars resulted in the broader exposure of Mennonites to the larger world through CPS and other alternate service programs. Eventually the contextualization of the gospel in overseas mission was bound to alter the character of the North American sending churches. Training of pastors introduced professionalism in leadership with the desire to distinguish between faith and culture. In a conversation with Theron Schlabach, he observed that the shift from Daniel Kauffman to Paul Erb as editor of the *Gospel Herald* in 1944 symbolized the transition in leadership from formal authority and zeal for purity to a more educated leadership inclined toward greater flexibility and openness to cultural variety. Some conferences began in the 1950s and '60s to welcome a more representational authority through lay delegates to their sessions.

Not to be overlooked in this time of change was the growing individualism in North American society and the challenges to established structures and designated leadership in a church where the boundaries were eroding rapidly.

These changes were also reflected in denominational structure. The General Problems Committee which had been concerned with nonconformity, became the Church Welfare Committee in 1961, charged to address issues of diversity and unity. A new Confession of Faith

was adopted in 1963 to provide a clear point of reference amidst rapid social change. At the 1967 General Conference held at Lansdale, Pa., communion was observed for the first time in a churchwide setting, symbolizing the shift from communion as a uniform practice of discipline toward a more open expression of fellowship in Christ. This same General Conference agreed to launch a reorganization which resulted in the current denominational structure adopted in Kitchener, Ont., in 1971. Institutionalization and organizational development in an era of unprecedented prosperity seemed to be one way to provide direction for the church in a time of rapid change.

The 1971 denominational reorganization assumed conferences would not survive the rapid changes going on in the church and built a system of regions as new structures for congregational affiliation. The assumption was that if conferences no longer functioned with the old authority of rules and discipline, they either had no reason to exist or at least were expendable in favor of broader geographical groupings of congregations. We, of course, know today how mistaken these assumptions were. Beginning in the late 1960s and into the 1980s, almost all conferences went through their own reorganization, often mimicking the structuresof the denomination.

In spite of earlier assumptions, we have witnessed a quickening of life in the conferences with renewed commitment to provide services and vision for the congregations which make up the conference. A certain pattern of staff developed in many of our conferences. Usually a conference minister was employed first, followed by staff for youth, a mission staff person and then a conference executive. Some conferences also began to employ persons to work at nurture, stewardship, and peace issues. The result today is that we have in some conferences an intermediate structure which parallels the ministries of the denomination. In addition to the conferences, associate groups have developed and urban councils are formed in some larger cities as other networks of churches with common interests. I might observe that the decline of churchwide ministries which began in the mid-1980s, due to shifts in allocations of funds by congregations, is now being faced by the conferences who also are needing to modify programs and discem how to posture themselves for the 21st century. There seems to exist a dynamic synergy between conferences and the denomination.

What I have described in structural terms actually reflects a deeper theological shift that has gone on among us. To counter the excessive authority of conferences in the first half of the 20th century, the 1963 Confession of Faith boldly declares, "The primary unit of the church is the local assembly of believers. It is in the congregation that the work of teaching and discipling is carried on." The confession goes on to state the scriptural legitimacy for conferences "to assist local congregations in maintaining biblical standards of faith, conduct, stewardship, and mission." But the confession clearly shifts the accent from the conference to the congregation (Article 8). Article 10 on the ministers of the church says almost nothing about bishops. It emphasizes the role of pastors and concern for the involvement of the "brotherhood."

The Bylaws of the Mennonite Church adopted in 1971 state, "The congregation is the primary unit of Mennonite Church organization." The conference serves as the main administrative structure for the congregations. The shift toward the congregation is so pronounced that in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Beulah Hostetler writes that after the 1971 reorganization, "there was a general return to congregational autonomy with conferences being advisory" (Vol. 5, p. 567). Personally I find *advisory* too weak a word for the conference/congregation polity which existed prior to the 20th century or following reorganization in 1971.

There is no question that congregations today are assuming more responsibility for their own life and mission. In this respect we parallel developments among all denominations in North America. There are healthy features to this growth in congregational responsibility and initiative. There is no way we could have navigated the dramatic changes we experienced the last 30 years or accommodated the growing diversity among us without allowing a high degree of congregationalism. In every conference variety is permitted among congregations as a way to maintain unity while recognizing diversity. The woman's veiling, divorce and remarriage, women as pastoral leaders, and members serving in the military are examples of issues where congregations generally choose their own course. (The current issue testing our conference unity and polity is homosexuality.)

To be sure, some ministers and congregations were unable to allow this diversity and withdrew from conferences in Franconia, Lancaster, Virginia, Indiana-Michigan, and Oregon. Other conference also experienced tensions. But the unity we have experienced overall is fairly remarkable. It should also be noted that some congregations and members left our conferences over the years because change was too slow and flexibility was not sufficient to accommodate their needs. Steering the middle course in times of rapid change was not easy. H. S. Bender made the case in a 1926 article that generally conferences and bishops were more progressive than many lay people *(Goshen College Record Supplement)*. The difficult challenge facing many conference leaders has been responding to critics on both the left and the right within member congregations.

Every generation offers a corrective to the previous generation's successes. While the 1963

Confession of Faith and 1971 reorganization emphasized the congregation, the new Confession of Faith and leadership polity which are currently being developed call us to see church as existing simultaneously in the congregation, in conferences and in the denomination. Indeed, some persons believe we have embraced an unhealthy congregationalism and are calling us to recover a greater sense of interdependence among congregations to temper the individualism of our society.

Coupled with this redefining of church are calls to recover the "office" of minister with certain authority for leaders that exceeds a functional role. Pastors and overseers are to serve in response to the call of God and the church in a capacity that transcends the particular person in office or whims of a given age or situation. This recovery of the office of minister is again a corrective to the denigration of leadership in the 1960s and 1970s. While most of our conferences have rejected the role and title of bishop, there is today a growing recognition of the importance of oversight ministries for congregations.

The reality is that our Mennonite Church tradition, while flirting with congregationalism, never developed a theological or philosophical rationale for the individual member or congregation such as developed in the General Conference Mennonite Church. Neither have we found the freedom to embrace the credo which informally guides General Conference Mennonites: "in essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things love." At times we have swung toward a stronger corporate authority and definition of church, but more recently we have moved toward greater congregational freedom. *But the central pole against which divergence is measured has always been marked by an emphasis on interdependence or corporate authority.*

We have a congregational base with certain synodal features. Currently our synodal character finds specific expression in two areas: first, conferences reserve the authority to grant credentials to ministers and to discipline ministers. Second, conferences normally determine the confession of faith expected of congregations, and reaffirm General Assembly statements or issues believed to be of a significance for the common life of the congregations. While conferences provide certain programmatic services, beyond these two specific points, conferences have very little formal authority. Some conferences demonstrate greater flexibility than others in tolerating differences among congregations. As noted earlier we have a tradition of conferences disciplining congregations who deviate too far from the expected norms. But generally conferences are more inclined toward a conciliatory stance and bend every effort to seek some ground for unity when conflict arises.

Conclusion

In preparing this address, I found myself often gravitating toward words like *balance, tension* and *dynamic* in seeking to understand Mennonite Church polity. Our history has been one of attempting to hold in balance the congregation and conference, the individual and corporate body. Certain inherent tensions pressed us in different directions at different times. *But the reference point for us has been the congregation and the conference living in a dynamic relationship.* While greater weight shifted from one to the other at certain times in our history, our theology and practice never called into question the close wedding of the congregation and the conference. Sometimes a rigid legalism overshadowed grace. At other times correctives were needed for local definitions of discipleship that were deemed too shallow.

As we look toward the 21st century new challenges face us. Much has been made of the different polities between the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church which will need attention if we integrate our two denominations. But the more formidable task we face is how to be a church in a secular society where we no longer can assume the knowledge of Christianity or the reinforcement of our faith in public education, government policies, or the media. If the church does not assume responsibility for defining and nurturing a life of discipleship, our members are left to the vagaries of society and to authoritarian religious bodies all too eager to claim adherents. The Ayatollahs and Jerry Falwells have an allure in a context where identity is unclear because of muted structures of authority.

In his 1987 Comelius H. Wedel Historical Series, Rod Sawatsky writes:

> People will find authority someplace, if not in the right place then in the wrong place, if not in the church then possibly in the state, if not in God then likely in their egoistic selves, if not in orthodoxy then probably in heterodoxy.
>
> Furthermore, the identity of a community must by definition be premised on a common set of assumptions—a common authority. If the authority is weak, the identity is weak. (p. 85)

Can we express an authority in our conferences and congregations that provides a clear identity in a secular world and offers a positive alternative to those for whom life is empty of meaning and for those who are attracted to competing faith claims? Will our polity continue to affirm the presence of the living Christ leading the church in understanding how to live out the Scriptures for our time? It seems to me that is our challenge as we approach the 21st century.

Ignited and Extinguished Torches: Society of Brothers in Review

Arnold, Emmy. *Torches Together: The Beginning and Early Years of the Bruderhof Communities.* 2nd edition, Rifton: Plough, 1971. Pp. 231. $9.00

Mow, Merrill. *Torches Rekindled.* Rifton: Plough, 1989. Pp. 309. $14.50

Bohlken-Zumpe, Bette. *Torches Extinguished.* Carrier Pigeon Press, 1993. Pp. 300. $15.00

Three newly-wed couples at the Bruderhof in England, May 5, 1945. Credit: MCC Photograph Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.

By Marlin Jeschke

The Society of Brothers, often also called the Bruderhof because of its origin in Germany, next year can celebrate the 75th anniversary of its founding by Eberhard Arnold. Arnold died in 1935 at the age of only 52, possibly because a Nazi surgeon under orders saw to it that Arnold never woke up from an operation for a gangrenous broken leg. Perhaps because of Arnold's early death, but also definitely because of the buffeting of circumstances—escaped to England from persecution in Nazi Germany, rejected as Germans in England, and forced to go to the primitive Paraguayan Chaco—the Society has lurched unsteadily from crisis to crisis. Many of these crises revolved around the problem of leadership succession.

The story of the Society has been told in several books. In 1964 Emmy Arnold, widow of founder Eberhard, offered her version of its history up to that time in *Torches Together.* Her version came out of direct personal experience and focused upon its earliest and most visionary years. In 1989 Merrill Mow, a Church of the Brethren convert, presented an officially sanctioned, updated account, *Torches Rekindled.* It was calculated to explain—and to justify the outcome of—the leadership struggle and upheavals of 1959-1961, when Eberhard's son Heini replaced Eberhard's son-in-law Hans Zumpe. In this struggle, over 600 members of the community were purged in the exposure of Hans Zumpe's adultery and the dissolution of the England and Paraguay colonies in consequence of the establishment of the Woodcrest colony in New York State and the concentration of power there.

Mow's history prompted Bette Bohlken-Zumpe, daughter of Hans Zumpe and granddaughter of founder Eberhard Arnold, to make what she considers a much-needed corrective. Her book, being reviewed here, is entitled *Torches Extinguished* (edited by Gertrude Enders Huntington, and published by Carrier Pigeon Press, 1993). The title obviously suggests that the early vision of the Society has been lost. Bohlken-Zumpe resents what she considers her father's portrayal as the essence of evil—his adultery notwithstanding—and Heini's leadership as the triumph of righteousness.

Her story ends up more an autobiography than a history of the Society, however. Even though she is an Eberhard Arnold granddaughter, she was only a child during the Paraguay years and was not in on the leadership struggles. Much of her account therefore is about her relatively carefree growing up and later personal struggles while away from the colony in going through nurse's training in England and America. Her rather intensely subjective description of these years and her inner turmoil during that time does not so much throw light on what was happening in the leadership power struggle as it does on what trauma the Society kind of life had on individuals subjected to an imposition of guilt feelings, efforts at attitude control, and punitive measures used to attempt to gain that control.

Bohlken-Zumpe by her own admission was very much torn between, on the one hand, adoration of her uncle Heini and his efforts to subject her will to the Society's control and, on the other hand, growing outrage at the Society's hypocrisy and determination to become her own person free of the Society's domination.

In all three books mentioned

here, some basic facts are clear. At founder Eberhard's death, his young son-in-law Hans Zumpe, married to the oldest Arnold daughter, Emi-Margret, was already entrusted with much responsibility in the community, whether because Eberhard found in him a capable and trustworthy assistant or because the Arnold sons were too young at the time to be given much responsibility. Eberhard is alleged to have said that in the event of his death, Zumpe should become leader and in due time bring his sons into leadership responsibilities also.

It is not clear whether Zumpe arrogated to himself too much power or misused his power as leader from 1935 to 1941 and during the Emavera, Paraguay, years(1941-1959) and/or tried to keep the Arnold sons out of power. Bohlken-Zumpe claims the sons engaged in angry shouting at some Paraguay meetings, and it is a fact that Heini was placed in "exclusion" for a considerable period of time during the Paraguay years.

The Mow version of the Society's history depicts the victory of Heini Arnold and Woodcrest in the early '60s as the vindication of what Eberhard—and the Spirit—intended: the restoration of the right leadership and recovery of the original Eberhard Arnold vision, hence the title, *Torches Rekindled*. The Bohlken-Zumpe version depicts the victory of her uncle Heini as a departure into autocratic and even "cultic" rule. She claims that the purge of over 600 members in the early l960s was Heini Arnold's revenge against those who had endorsed his exclusion in Paraguay and who were unwilling to do adequate repentance for it.

Bohlken-Zumpe admits her own complicity in this retaliation against some members at a time when her own standing in the Society was precarious and she seemed to be trying to ingratiate herself with her uncle's leadership. When one couple at Oak Lake "mentioned that in 1944 there had been so much disunity, so much shouting in the brotherhood (especially by the Arnold sons), that they felt relieved when, after the Arnold exclusion, everything returned to normal," Bohlken-Zumpe jumped up and shouted, "I feel the coldness of your spirit filling this room and it makes me shiver!" The next day the couple was asked to pack their bags and leave.

The reader of *Torches Extinguished* is inclined at points to sympathize with its author for unfortunate influences she encountered in her growing-up years in the Society. For example, when she was only six and playing with another child, balancing on some logs, some adult members of the Society made some ugly accusations for which she was grilled by older women of the community. "They questioned me and kept saying that it was better to tell the truth right away. . . . I searched my mind to find something they would want to hear. Finally, with a trembling voice I whispered. . ., `We played soldiers.' " That was the only thing a pacifist-educated child could think of!

" `No,' she said. `No, that is not what you did. Now for punishment you will have to sleep outside and go to bed without food. . . .' Next morning they started again, this time hitting me on my legs with very thin sticks, . . . repeating over and over again that I should tell the truth." Finding a moment to consult with her playmate, she asked, " `What do they want to hear?' `It's easy,' she said. `Just tell them that we looked at each others bottoms.' "

"So I promptly confessed to something that we never did, never thought of, and did not even think an interesting thing to do! So we were excluded from the other children for 10 days and worked in the laundry. We were both six years old."

At one point the reader is inclined to raise some questions about Bohlken-Zumpe's description of another personal experience, this one while in nurse's training in New York. She claims, "At a hospital party, they served a lot of punch, and I did not realize how much alcohol was in it. I had never had—or even like—alcoholic drinks. But the punch was good, very sweet, and I drank it like lemonade. I became drunk and was raped by a young doctor." One wonders whether the author should not accept a little more responsibility for this incident, even though, as she claims, she had received a far too inadequate sexual education in the Society.

It turned out to be one of the things the community put her into exclusion for, though other issues such as her attitude entered into the picture. For nearly a year at one point, she was isolated by the community, made to live by herself in a cabin at the edge of the colony, and given the job of cleaning the colony toilets day after day. She confesses that at this point in her life she still had feelings of loyalty to her uncle Heini and struggled to subject herself to the will of the community and to cultivate the desired attitude of penitence and self-abnegation.

Whether because she was an Arnold, or because of the persistence of German romanticism and idealism in the community from its German Youth Movement days, or because of the persistent emphasis in the community on attitude and mind control—or all of the above—Bohlken-Zumpe exhibits a mercurial temperament and rides a roller coaster of moods throughout her youth. Even in her adult life, after getting married to a Dutch man—apparently fairly happily so—she admits to a persisting love-hate feeling for the community in which she grew up. She found a closeness and security there she still misses but also a stifling suppression of personal rights she is glad to have escaped.

In an appendix, the author establishes to this reviewer's satisfaction that Hans Zumpe attempted numerous times in 1960, following his excommunication for adultery, to seek forgiveness and reconciliation with his wife, but community censorship intercepted the letters. His

wife never received them. Bohlken-Zumpe claims that her uncle Heini decided that her father should never be allowed back into the community and given even a chance to challenge Heini Arnold's leadership. According to the author, Heini was afraid that his own power and control might be dislodged the way he and some other dissidents, members at that time on the outs, had once walked into a colony in England and taken it over in a coup.

Readers of the several histories of the Society have a right to doubt if they will ever get an objective and unbiased factual account of the Society, especially since so much of it hangs upon "attitude"—whether this or that individual sufficiently surrendered his or her will to the community, or showed the right spirit in one or another crisis. So much seems to depend on who was in power. Bohlken-Zumpe claims that "the Bruderhof worships men to such a degree that God becomes smaller and smaller. The Bible is not as important as the writings of their leaders. That is what is known as A CULT."

Something seems to be fundamentally questionable and even wrong in a movement in which 623 members were purged at one juncture, many of whom were deeply and sincerely committed to life in the brotherhood and wanted, even begged, to stay in it. Something seems wrong in a movement marked by a fruitbasket upset round of exclusion after exclusion of mature members and leaders, including at one time even the elderly widow of founder Eberhard Arnold.

I am sure the present leaders of the Society are not happy with Bohlken-Zumpe's book. Heini Arnold died in 1989, and his son Christoph is now the Society's head. But then Bohlken-Zumpe was not satisfied with Mow's book. We are justified in keeping on the lookout for further information on the history of the Society—and to watch with interest its future development.

Marlin Jeschke is retired from teaching at Goshen College and is living in Berlin, Ohio.

The Effects of an MC-GC Merger on Archives and Historical Activities

by John D. Thiesen

How would a Mennonite Church-General Conference Mennonite Church merger affect historical activities? Given the impending vote at Wichita '95, this is an important question.

First I'll describe the current situation in Mennonite historical activities, then list principles or axioms that could guide us in moving toward a new structure for historical activities. I'll describe what I think a new historical network would look like and some of the challenges facing it in the near future.

The Current Situation

The Mennonite Church has a denomination-wide, binational Historical Committee with a fairly large budget. This committee reports to the MC General Board and runs the archives in Goshen, Ind., in addition to doing more general promotional and educational activities concerning church history. There is also a Mennonite Church Historical Association which operates out of the archives in Goshen, a membership organization for those interested in MC historical activities. It publishes the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*.

The Mennonite Historical Library at Goshen (Ind.) College is separate from the archives and is not under the MC Historical Committee. Rather, it is under the auspices of the college and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. There is also a Mennonite Historical Society operating out of the seminary and college context, whose purposes and membership seem to have been somewhat unclear over the years. Certainly, it seems to be in flux now.

On the General Conference side, there has been a denomination-wide historical committee off and on over the years. The last one was eliminated by budget cuts. I was appointed as the GC participant/observer to the MC Historical Committee after the GC committee's demise. The General Conference has its archives and historical library combined in the Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College. The college operates the Mennonite Library and Archives for the General Conference under a memo of understanding. The budget for the archives, and for the historical committee, when it still existed, came from the Commission on Education rather than the GC General Board or Division of Administration.

The GCs in Canada, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, has a History/Archives Committee and their official archives at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg. Their budget is about twice as large as the budget for the binational GC archives at Bethel College. The provincial area conferences generally don't have historical committees.

To turn away from denominational bureaucracies, we are seeing an explosion of local and regional Mennonite historical organizations. A quick check of the *Mennonite Yearbook* shows that about half of all the historical societies, archives, and museums listed have originated in the past 20 years. The *Yearbook* listing is by no means complete, either. The last four or five years have seen a real spate of such new organizations: Nebraska, Michiana, Cumberland Valley. There have also been reorganizations and revitalizations; in California, the Mennonite Brethren Historical Society of the West Coast was reformed into the California Mennonite Historical Society.

This last example illustrates the fact that many such local and regional organizations are inter-Mennonite, sometimes aggressively so. At the denominational level, the GC and MC committees worked on several cooperative projects and tried to organize some exchange of committee members and attendance at each other's meetings. I'm the remnant of that intention. There has also been such interaction with the Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission. I think there was even a three-way meeting in Goshen once, GC, MC, and MB. The MC committee met with the MB committee on the West Coast in May.

Now I want to propose principles or axioms that could guide the planning of historical activities in the merger era.

Principles for Historical Activities in the Merger Era

First, we want to *have* a historical committee and archives. I don't know if I should comment on this, but I've heard an oral tradition among MCs that in 1971, with the change from a "general conference" to a "general assembly," the historical committee was deliberately left out of the plan of the new organization; it was put back in by floor action at the conference that approved the reorganization. Whether or not this is really true, we don't want something like that to happen now. Furthermore, we don't want to have a historical committee and archives without a budget.

I don't know exactly how we go about impressing on the denominational bureaucracies what we want. We certainly haven't been successful on the GC side. I think the big push is going to have to come from the MC side and from the MC Historical Committee in particular.

Second, I think we want to rock the boat as little as possible. We

don't want to throw all the papers in the archives up in the air and see where they come down, so to speak. This principle has consequences mostly for the archives: I don't think it's a good use of resources to move archival records around geographically as a result of integration; I don't think we want to close any archives; and I don't think we want to reduce the budget of the Historical Committee or any of the archives. Indeed, to reduce the current budgets of the archives would be equivalent to closing them.

A New Historical Network

So what would a merged Mennonite historical system look like and what things—both new and old—would it do?

First, from the denominational bureaucracy viewpoint, I think historical activities will end up at the national rather than the binational or continental level. I think the trend toward nationalization is pretty much inevitable. What I'm going to say here is fairly generic, so it could apply to both the U.S. and Canada, but since the dominant Canadian Mennonite denomination already has an active History/Archives Committee, what I'm going to say is mostly directed at the U.S. situation.

We should have a historical committee that reports to the General Board at the national level. It should be placed under the General Board rather than elsewhere in the organization chart (remember the GC committee was under the Commission on Education) because the historical committee has two functions, or major groups of functions. They are (1) records management and (2) history education. Neither of these two functions should overshadow the other. In MC and GC historical committees in the past, for example, the records management function—developing archival and library holdings, gathering obscure 16th-century sources for the scholars to use—was the dominant activity. In the present, I think the temptation is the opposite. Both functions are necessary and interdependent. Without some kind of interpretation to a wider audience, the records in the archives are not of much use; but the foundation of such history interpretation to the church at large is the documents in the archives. You can't really have one without the other.

Now some more detail about what I foresee for each of these two functions: I think we can plan for a regionalization of archives; we, in fact, already have it. Certain archives would be officially sponsored by the historical committee; initially these would be at Goshen and Bethel, although I think in the long run there would be others, especially farther to the East and West. The archives that officially relate to the historical committee would receive part of their budget from the committee; in effect, this is a continuation of the situation we have now. I envision these archives as each being located at one of the Mennonite schools (not necessarily at the colleges, since in Oregon, for example, we might eventually have a committee-funded archives at Western Mennonite School) and would receive additional funding from the school and be operated by the school. The schools are used to hiring academic, professional personnel and could easily manage each of the archives in connection with their existing libraries. Such local management would be easier than trying to manage regional archives by long-distance from a centrally located historical committee office. Each archives/historical library would be governed by a board representing three constituencies: the historical committee, the school where it is located, and local users (such as local historical societies and area conferences). I would expect that each archives would get funding from all three of these constituencies, with a major emphasis on endowment-based funding.

There will probably be some policies that would apply to all of the archives sponsored by the historical committee. Certainly the effort to maintain professional archival and library standards and practices will be enforced by the committee, but each archives will need to be responsive to local conditions. For example, at Bethel we have acquired a number of local records that are not particularly Mennonite (for example, the papers of a local non-Mennonite poet), simply because there is no active non-Mennonite archives in our area to take responsibility. If we didn't keep these records, they would simply be destroyed. A governing board like I have described could balance the universal and local interests and funding sources.

There are certain tasks and challenges the various archives could face together, coordinated by the historical committee. For example, we need to be more active with the various Mennonite organizations, to offer a service to them in keeping their records of long-term value, and to challenge them to good stewardship of their records. We need to do some common advertising to educate the public—individuals and families—about what archives do and how we can help them and to challenge families to preserve the many significant documents they have. We need to create a way to help train and educate persons who are archivists for regional and local historical societies, for congregations, or for Mennonite agencies who choose to keep their own records. We all will face a serious challenge in the next couple of decades with the growing use of electronic documents—even by individuals—and the growing expectation of archives users that everything—no matter how obscure—should be available instantaneously on-line. The archives are beginning to be connected via the Internet already. There is also a Mennonite listserver or discussion group on the Internet. These are some of the things we could do together.

The second major function of the historical committee is and will be education. This is the hard one. How do we do this successfully? This is not a problem just for educating people about history, but for other subjects as well. It seems to me that there is a general decline of interest in Mennonite churches in all sorts of things, not just church history, but doctrine, ethics, and Bible knowledge. It sometimes seems that there are fewer and fewer people in the church who are literate enough or educated enough to have an interest in learning about anything.

In spite of being pessimistic, there are a couple of comments I want to make about our educational task. First, I think we should be concerned about teaching church history generally, not just Mennonite history, certainly not just 16th-century Anabaptist history, but the whole story of the church from the first century down through the stories of the church in non-European countries today, encompassing the whole spectrum of Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and other versions of Christianity.

Second, we probably need to move more aggressively and creatively into new media: video, computer-based multimedia, and the like. These things get a lot of totally unjustified hype these days, and they have their definite weaknesses, but history education needs to be more aware of this area.

Third, we need to have history education linked closely to Christian education generally. What we often have now is history education in its own little box, and then Christian education about the Bible and so on is a whole separate world. These things need to be together, which means that the historical committee in its education activities needs to work closely with whatever agency is developing educational resources for the church on these other subjects.

I've noted the two tasks of the historical committee: records management and education, but there is one other area I want to mention. Most of the local and regional Mennonite history organizations are broadly inter-Mennonite; they include everyone interested in Mennonite history. They are pointing the direction for the future. A new historical committee after an MC-GC merger will not exist in isolation. It will need to work consciously on cooperation with other persons and organizations interested in Mennonite history.

One model that comes to mind is something called the Lutheran Historical Conference. I don't know a great deal about it, but I do know that this group brings Lutherans together across their intra-Lutheran divisions (which are much more bitter than Mennonite divisions) in the interests of historical activity. They have, I think, an annual meeting, and some ongoing programs. We probably need to move toward some kind of well-organized inter-Mennonite historical activity. There is currently no national or binational, inter-Mennonite historical society. This is a direction we need to explore further.

Conclusion

I'm somewhat nervous about the Mennonite future. The example of the Dutch Mennonites is perhaps a warning. In 1700 there were 160,000 Mennonites in the Netherlands; in 1808 there were only 27,000, a decline of 83 percent. In other words, Mennonites almost disappeared from that country in the course of one century. Sometimes I wonder if we are on the verge of a similar kind of experience. Do we have so much assimilation into society at large that we are getting collective amnesia, that we're forgetting who we are? I don't mean assimilation in externals, but in mental attitudes and beliefs. Collective amnesia is common in society at large; many Americans are completely ignorant of their history, whether it be personal or national. Mennonites are becoming much the same.

Our challenge is to maintain some kind of identity that reaches beyond mere external signs to attitudes and beliefs.

John Thiesen presented this paper at the conference on "The Experience of Mennonite Women" in Harleysville, Pa., Oct. 22, 1994. He is archivist of the Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

News and notes

The Howard Miami Counties Heritage and Genealogical Society was formed recently. At the March 25, 1995 meeting, the following officers were chosen: Joseph Horner, West Liberty, Ohio, chair; Annagene Myers Welsh, Kokomo, Indiana, Vice-chair; Beulah Marner Cobb, Kokomo, Indiana, Secretary-Treasurer; and Elaine Sommers Rich, Bluffton, Ohio, Executive Secretary.

The program of **Lives Well Lived: Stories of Indiana Mennonite Women of the Last Century** drew over 300 persons to the Greencroft Senior Center, Goshen, Indiana, on March 26, 1995. Octogenarian Esther Miller Bigler told of the beginnings of the Mennonite Nurses' Association in the 1920s. Tonya Histand modeled Esther Miller Bigler's nursing uniform of the 1920s, which she used at the La Junta Mennonite School of Nursing. Six other Goshen College students presented sketches of six other women: Lydia Oyer, Lina Zook Ressler, Rhea Yoder, Fannie Shantz Smucker, Phoebe Kolb and Clara Hooley Hershberger. The program was chaired by Shirley Showalter, and organized by Helen Alderfer. It was co-sponsored by Menno-Hof, Greencroft Senior Center, the Historical Committee and the Indiana Humanities Council.

Sang Jin Choi, a Korean student studying at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary,

Malinda Berry interviews Esther Miller Bigler at the Greencroft Senior Center, Goshen, Indiana, March 26, 1995. Bigler reflected on the beginnings of the Mennonite Nurses' Association. It started "as a part of the Mission Board conferences at various places, which were held usually in the country, at a country church. The nurses wanted to meet their missionary friends who had come home for Mission Board conferences. And so every church in the country had a cemetery, and that was where the meeting was held, in the cemetery at one of the Mission Board conferences. And it has been a wonderful thing because we keep in touch with one another." Esther Miller Bigler was a 1927 graduate of the La Junta Mennonite School of Nursing, Colorado.

Elkhart, Indiana, was recently at the archives to research the involvement of Mennonite Central Committee in Korea, 1950-1971. His research paper, entitled "A Study of the MCC's Economic Justice Policy toward South Korea: From 1950 to 1971," includes the story of the food and clothing distribution, the Mennonite Vocational School, the sewing project, the family-child assistance program, and the international reconciliation work camps. Choi also adds his evaluation and recommendations regarding MCC's work in his homeland.

Two exhibits are being prepared for Mennonite Church General Assembly in Wichita this month. **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 1995 and Janice Wiebe Ollenberger has been collecting photographs and illustrations for a display which tells their story. MMA is also publishing a 50th anniversary issue of their publication Sharing.

The **Historical Committee** is planning a display on the 75th anniversary of the Mennonite Central Committee. MCC is one of the major collections housed at the Archives of the Mennonite Church. This display will "Tell the Story through Pictures" and will focus on three areas: relief efforts in Europe after World War I, Civilian Public Service in the United States of America, and relief and service efforts in Europe and beyond after World War II. Leonard Gross and Ruth Schrock are designing and producing this display.

James Juhnke will be the featured speaker at the *Mennonite Church Historical Association dinner at Wichita '95.* Juhnke will speak on the life of Ed G. Kaufman (1891-1980), General Conference Mennonite missionary, college president and churchman. The dinner meeting will be held Wednesday from 5:00-6:30 in Century II, room 202. No reservations are needed to attend. If you've purchased the meal package, simply take your tray to room 202. All are welcome!

Director John Sharp and family, Michele, Erin, MJ and Laura, have now relocated from Scottdale, Pennsylvania, to Middlebury, Indiana. John began his duties as director June 1.

Mennonite Historical Bulletin
Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church
1700 South Main Street
Goshen, IN 46526
Telephone 219 535-7477
Forward and Address Correction Requested

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Scottdale, Pa
Permit No. 3

MENNONITE
Historical Bulletin

Vol. LVI October 1995 ISSN 0025-9357 No. 4

Women were the majority among the first workers at the Eastern Mennonite Home in Souderton, Pa. The home was founded in 1917. Lydia Gross of Doylestown is in the front row, on the left. Credit: The MeetingHouse, Harleysville, Pa.

Reading Between the Lines: Stories of Women Leaders in the Franconia Conference

by Mary Jane Hershey

The stories of the leaders in the Franconia Mennonite Conference have been recorded in the official histories. J .C. Wenger's *History of the Mennonites* of the Franconia Conference, published in 1937, and John L. Ruth's *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*, published in 1984, tell the stories. But few of us know what women did. Filling this gap is difficult since sources are incredibly scarce. Looking, searching, talking, and reading between the lines may give insight into the contributions of women in Franconia Conference history. The telling of the stories that follow, though incomplete, wide-ranging, and meandering, is an attempt to read between the lines in order to illuminate a few of the shadows.

The Lot and the Library

First, to prepare for this paper, I checked the indexes of our two Franconia histories, but the name of Catherine Delp Kulp (1772-1844) does not appear. J. C. Wenger tells a story about the ordination of her husband, Jacob, at Doylestown in 1818. When the congregation decided they needed another minister, nominations were received from the

men of the congregation. But somehow Catherine was asked who she would nominate for a new minister. Catherine said she hardly knew anybody in the congregation, since her family was from Lower Salford and Hilltown, but she knew that her husband, Jacob, could preach. From her recommendation, Jacob's name was put into the lot, and the lot fell on him.

Although Wenger records this delightful story, Catherine's name does not appear in his index, only her husband's name. John Ruth finds this story in Wenger's book and recounts it in his history. But Ruth doesn't tell us her name; he only tells us she is "Jacob Kulp's wife."

Another example of a woman whose name was not recorded is in an essay published in *The Pennsylvania-German* April of 1909. An article about Preacher Jacob Mensch (1835-1912) from Skippack gives information about his "exceptional library." The anonymous writer says this about the library: "The nucleus of his collection [had] been laid by his grandfather and then added to from year to year by his father and himself." Someone has underlined the word "grandfather" with a line out to the margin and written in a very shaky hand in pencil, "Grandmother Bechtel." She was the mother of Mary Bechtel (b. 1808), who married Abraham Mensch, and the grandmother of Jacob Mensch. Grandmother Mary Bechtel was born in 1773, the daughter of Rosina Weiss (1747-1806) and Garret Bechtel (d. 1796). This "exceptional library" is now called "The Jacob Mensch Library" and is in the possession of the Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania. Did any of us know that Grandmother Bechtel also had a part in accumulating this collection?

Share and Share Alike

Though there was inequality in many areas, sons and daughters seemed to be treated equally by parents. Both sexes were educated in the meetinghouse schools where students studied in quarter-terms, taught by competent schoolmasters who were members of the congregation or who were well-situated residents of the community. Perhaps girls received more days of schooling than boys. An inventory of fraktur bookplates in manuscript hymn tune notebooks made for children in Bucks and Montgomery County meetinghouse schools from 1780 to 1845 shows that of 118 surviving examples, 66 were made for daughters.

Parents kept books in which they recorded in great detail items given to each child. The Clemens family book (1749-1857) notes the careful recordkeeping of several generations, detailing how the family wealth was shared. The dowry for daughters consisted of furniture, kitchen utensils, linens, animals, and garden equipment. Indeed, in reading some of these lists, one wonders what the husband brought to the household! Later the daughters received sums of money to equal what the sons had obtained in buildings and lands. If the land a son received was valued higher than what his siblings were given, he paid this off in equal shares to his siblings. If everything was not equal when the last parent died, the will made provisions for continuing the sharing of the parent's wealth. Henry Lederach's will of 1799 mentions "My Book" and tells how son John is to pay off the real estate in equal share to his five sisters and one brother. Henry reveals his hope for his childrens when he writes, "Everyone has his full equal share and that my children shall share and do all in peace and quietness is my hearty desire."

Interestingly, this "share and share alike" tradition continued in the Lederach family into my generation. My father, Willis Kulp Lederach (1896-1983), a careful keeper of financial records, had a book in which he recorded all funds given to his four children. Although we all graduated from Goshen College, my siblings studied at universities in Ohio, California, and Texas. I did my graduate work in Philadelphia and obtained an assistantship which paid all expenses plus a stipend. Years after I had finished my graduate work, my father

The ***Mennonite Historical Bulletin*** is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Church Historical Association.

Editor: John E. Sharp; **Review editor:** **Design:** Jim Butti; **Contributing editors:** J. Robert Charles, Sandra Cronk, Marlene Epp, Reg Good, Rachel Waltner Goossen, Leonard Gross, Amos B. Hoover, Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Russell Krabill, Glenn M. Lehman, Joseph Liechty, Joseph S. Miller, Levi Miller, Steven Nolt, Erv Schlabach, Jonathan Showalter, Mary Sprunger, Dennis Stoesz, Gerald Studer, Wilmer Swope, Marilyn Helmuth Voran, Frank Yoder.

Historical Committee: Gerald Hudson, Arlin D. Lapp (chair), Hope Kauffman Lind, Marcus Miller, John D. Roth, Kimberly Schmidt, Carolyn C. Wenger, Nate Yoder.

Dues for subscription membership in the Mennonite Church Historical Association ($20 annual), inquiries, articles, or news items should be sent to the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526. Telephone 219 535-7477, fax 219 535-7660.

Microfilms of Volumes IL of the ***Mennonite Historical Bulletin*** are available from: University Microfilms, Inc., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

came to me with a sizable check. He said, "Jane, this is your share to equalize what I paid for the graduate studies of your siblings." I can remember the feelings of love, acceptance, and worth conveyed by this unexpected gift.

The Knack for Making Money

Although the traditional primary role of a woman in the Franconia Mennonite Conference community was to be a keeper of the home and family, there were exceptions. A few women were involved in the economic growth of the community. Some had special gifts in business.

Ann Garges (1801-1885), married to Henry Lederach (1797-1876), a blacksmith in the village of Lederach, was a 19th-century general store proprietor. An account published in 1888 records that "Ann Garges, like nearly all the Gargeses, had the knack for making money." Ann, who lived in the village of Lederach, started a store in her home which was located on a main thoroughfare where three roads converged at a five-point intersection. Every day the stagecoach, which ran between Allentown and Norristown, stopped at this crossroad. When Ann first started her store "there were no shelves in the room, for she commenced on a small scale, a large table con[tained] all the dry goods. Groceries and other things were kept in small quantities, and the stock was increased no faster than the funds increased, thus doing a sure and safe business. Gradually, however as he (Henry) worked at his trade and she tended her store, the funds increased until they had not only shelves in their room but the shelves full of goods, and groceries and other things in large quantities, as was becoming to a country store."

Another general store was opened across the corner at the Lederach village intersection. However, this competing store did not succeed because the Lederach store was so well managed that "to run opposition against them was [like] running against the wall."

The Lederach Store was begun and managed by Ann Garges Lederach (1801-1885). It was well stocked "as was becoming to a country store." Credit: Mary Jane Hershey

God Loveth a Cheerful Giver

Salford Church records show that women contributed significantly when special funds were requested by the Salford trustees. An 1850 proposal to build a meetinghouse records that from a list of 67 contributors, 10 were women. A March 29, 1856, trustees' report on the expansion of the cemetery contains a list of 98 contributors of which 14 were women. In 1874 money was collected to assist migrating Russian Mennonites and eight women gave alms.

In 1924 the entire congregation was solicited for funds to build a new meetinghouse. Three booklets record the names of all contributors with the amount of the gifts listed. Each booklet begins, "Dear Brother and Sister: Greetings in Jesus' name. We as a building committee solicit your aid in the erection of our new meeting-house which is to cost fifteen thousand dollars. God loveth a cheerful giver. II Cor. 9:7." These records show 152 contributing units. Some of these units consisted of wives and husbands as one unit, some were single men, and some were single women. Of the 152 units, 46 were women contributing in their names alone. This was a remarkable 30 percent of the contributors.

The young Lizzie M. Alderfer Heckler (1896-1987), who was widowed in 1918 when her husband, Harry B. Heckler, died from the flu epidemic at Camp Mean during WWI, gave $150. Lizzie did not remarry, but during her long and active life, she supported herself in the market and restaurant business in Philadelphia. Kate K. Delp (1847-1926) gave $1000 toward the 1924 building. If $1000 were converted to current dollar value, the significant amount of Kate's gift would become obvious.

Given to Hospitality

A wonderful, early example of a generous act of hospitality occurred about 1783 in Coventry Township, Chester County. There the almost-70-year-old Susanna Longacre "who labor[ed] under great bodily infirmity" gave food and drink to four weary, hungry travelers. Susanna's husband, Jacob, was not home when the travelers stopped. A young girl of eight or nine years

was the only other person in the house with her. When the travelers arrived, Susanna not only fed them, but also, at their request, gave them directions to a site in the community. These travelers turned out to be spies sent by the Pennsylvania government to see if citizens were assisting British prisoners. Susanna explained that she fed these travelers, just as she did any other person who stopped at her door. She was cited by the authorities and ordered to pay a 150-pound fine or to receive 117 lashes on her bare back as punishment. She petitioned the state for relief from the penalty because, she said, her dwelling place is by the side of a public road, where the needy traveler has generally partaken of such refreshment as the house afforded. She said that what she did was "as act of hospitality corresponding with her general conduct for many years past." Fifty-four of her neighbors supported her petition for relief from the punishment.

Feeding tramps and providing sleeping space for the homeless was part of daily life for 19th-century families. Although accounts of hospitality are recorded in the name of the male member of the household, it was the women in the home who did the work. Jacob Mensch kept 300 tramps in one year. "After giving them suppers, he would shelter them and then give them their breakfasts; but in no instance would he accept their labor for his hospitality." Jacob's wife was Mary Bauer (1831-1906). Her daughter Barbara assisted in serving these meals, and even when her parents were not home, the welcoming of visitors continued. On May 25, 1888, when Barbara was 22, she wrote to her parents who were traveling in central Pennsylvania, "I had 8 persons for supper Mond. eve."

Other records of hospitality include the account of Souderton minister Henry C. Krupp, who lived on Smokepipe Road in Franconia Township, Montgomery County. He fed 180 tramps in 1895, but surely it was Elisabeth Nice (d. 1900), his wife, who did the actual feeding and work. Jacob S. Rosenberger, who lived on Cherry Lane in Souderton, close to the railroad, recorded in 1897 that he lodged a total of 1,148 tramps! This remarkable number of vagrants sheltered and fed surely caused an inordinate amount of work for the women of the household. Anna G. Heebner (b. 1850) was his wife, and the daughters were Lily, who was 18, and Annie, who was just seven years old that busy year.

Good-Hearted, Kind-Hearted, and Peace-Loving

Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, the eminent Lutheran pastor at Trappe, Pennsylvania, records in his journal the death and funeral of a pious widow, 90-year-old Anna Marie Reiff, who was buried on January 8, 1753. He wrote, "She heard the Word of God regularly, proved herself to be a true widow, lived in solitude, put her hope in the living God, and was instant in prayer day and night." Her son joined others in "testifying with tears that she had been a pious widow, a domestic preacher, an intercessor, and a model of godliness." Affirming her son's testimony, "other impartial friends concurred, adding that she had been too little esteemed." Muhlenberg delivered the funeral address for widow Reiff in the Skippack Mennonite meetinghouse. She is buried in the Skippack meetinghouse cemetery.

Anna Marie Reiff had a daughter-in-law, also named Anna. The younger Anna is remembered through an unusual document which she wrote in 1773. The manuscript was written with "a neat hand in English," quite exceptional because Anna lived in a German-speaking community from which most surviving hand-written papers are in German.

A story about Catherine Freed, who married George Heckler in 1764, was passed orally through several generations in the Heckler family. A descendant, writing 100 years after Catherine's death, remembered the family relating that "Catherine was good-natured, kind-hearted, and peace-loving, and she was generous and kind to the poor." Catherine was particularly noted in her father, Peter's, will, written on October 29, 1784. He instructed that she and her sister, Elizabeth, receive extra pounds "for their faithful attention to him in his old age."

Sabrina Garges, was a resident of Lower Salford Township; her 18-year-old son, Jacob, bought a farm in 1810. The young Jacob was a productive, prosperous farmer, but Sabrina was credited for his achievement. "[She] stood by him and he succeeded remarkably well."

Miss Gehman's Hospital

Emma Gehman Ruth (1881-1951) was born on the family farm in Bally. She was baptized in the Bally meetinghouse when she was fifteen. During her childhood she experienced unusual health problems which continued into her teenage years. Because of her illness, she lived in Philadelphia with a woman doctor where she received treatment and recovered completely.

Possibly because of this unusual circumstance of living outside of the Mennonite farm community, Emma, as a young women, traveled alone to Canada, California, and Florida. In California, Emma took nurses's training and began to work in the health profession, concentrating particularly on assisting mothers in childbirth. On one occasion while working in Florida, she assisted in the delivery of an unwanted baby. She brought this child north with her and found a home for him with the family of her brother, John, in Quakertown.

In 1921 Emma bought a house at Third and Juniper Street in

Quakertown. In this house she opened a hospital and convalescent home, a facility recorded in various sources as "Miss Gehman's Hospital," "The Gehman Hospital," or "Gehman's Maternity Hospital." Her facility prospered and became a respected hospital in Quakertown. In 1927 when it became clear that the community needed a larger hospital, Emma Gehman was on the committee formed to plan a new facility. Her building was purchased by two doctors who converted it to their offices. On June 29, 1927, Emma's services to the community were recognized as she turned the first spade of dirt at the groundbreaking ceremony. She appears, in her uniform, in a photograph of officials at the occasion.

As part of her sales agreement in closing the hospital, Miss Gehman promised not to open another health center within 10 miles of Quakertown. The new hospital opened in 1930 and is today a major regional facility. After leaving Quakertown, Emma moved back to her hometown of Bally, married Harvey Ruth, and opened "Ruth's Convalescent Haven."

Emma Gehman Ruth (1881-1951) owned and operated the first hospital in Quakertown, Pa. Credit: The Gehman Family Reunion Committee

"Jacob, Be Quiet About the Ram Once"

Women filled roles as helpers to their ordained husbands. This co-worker relationship between husbands and wives is first noted in Franconia Conference history in 1769, when Christian Funk was about to be ordained as bishop for the Franconia circuit. Christian Meyer Jr., a confirmed deacon at Franconia, objected to the ordination of a bishop. At a meeting where the ordained men had gathered, those present seemed unable to change his thinking. Whereupon Magdalena, Christian Meyers's wife, called him out of the meeting. When he returned, the meeting proceeded. Christian no longer registered objection, and the lot was used to ordain Christian Funk as bishop. This incident may indicate that 250 years ago, wives were present at meetings and were influential in decisions.

This pattern continues in the problems Bishop Christian Funk had regarding his position of support for the colonial government, instead of continuing loyalty to Britain. Christian Funk was the only recorder of this incident and possibly presented himself in a favorable manner. However, his recording of the events that led to his censure and of the years following his excommunication is informative in noting how wives addressed issues and were involved in the discussions as decisions emerged. Those events follow:

When Henry Rosenberger and Jacob Oberholtzer came to Christian Funk's house to tell Funk he could no longer give communion, Funk's wife, Barbara Cassel, was present and told Henry Rosenberger and Jacob Oberholtzer, "You always cause such quarrels before communion." Then Rosenberger and Oberholtzer spoke harsh words to Barbara that hurt her deeply.

Next Christian Funk visited the 14 people who had complained about him. Funk felt that 12 of them were not totally negative. But two were. These were Maria Oberholtzer Bechtel, the wife of Samuel Bechtel, and Elizabeth Bechtel Gehman, the wife of Abraham Gehman. This mother-and-daughter team had husbands who were ministers at Rockhill. When Christian Funk asked them "Did you complain about me in the inquiry?" Maria Oberholtzer Bechtel, the mother, replied, "Yes, we did . . . because you have paid taxes (to the colonial government)." Funk said that Maria conveyed anger in her speech. Funk told them this was untrue; he had not paid taxes to the colonial government. Then, Funk writes, Maria and Elizabeth began to cry and indicated peace with him. Funk said he did not know if their husbands agreed with them. Does this mean the husbands were not present during the conversation?

Referring back to the initial conversation when Jacob Oberholtzer had told Christian Funk he could no longer give communion, Christian asked Jacob Oberholtzer if he had made peace with Christian's wife, Barbara. Oberholtzer said Funk should tell Barbara he had been in a uncontrollable rage that day when he said things that hurt Barbara. This continues the pattern showing Barbara had a persistent role in this conference conflict.

In 1778 when four of the ordained brethren came to Christian's house to tell him that he was being excommunicated, Christian was waiting for them with his support group, his wife, Barbara, and his sister, Frone. Barbara and Frone were actively involved in the confrontation. At one point his sister, Frone, said to Hans Berge, "Do you call [my brother] a liar to his face." Hans Bergey replied, "We're not calling him a liar." And Frone, not quiet and submissive, said, "You won't

take him at his word."

In 1783 after the war was over, and the country was free from English rule, the controversy did not end but became more heated. Specifically in 1783 Christian Funk was charged with the following: (a) Christian had cheated the township of about 25 pounds (money); (b) he had taken Jacob Bergey and Christian Meyer's good flour and replaced it with old, wormy flour; (c) he had stolen and secretly sold Christian Meyer's ram; and (d) he had wanted to take a ram from Jacob Oberholtzer. In a meeting of ministers, with their wives sitting by and listening, Oberholzer accused Funk of trying to take his ram . Jacob Oberholtzer said that Funk had cut off one of the ram's ears. At that, Oberholtzer's wife, Elisabeth Clemmer, could not remain silent. She said, "Jacob, be quiet about the ram once."

Years later, from 1804 to 1806, these men acknowledged that the accusations had been fabricated. And in 1807, Jacob Oberholtzer, who had accused Funk of cutting off a ram's ear, approached Funk in humility and asked forgiveness. Apparently, in the heat of pettiness of the 1783 charges, Elisabeth Clemmer Oberholtzer was the one voice of reason. It seems she realized the absurdness of the charges and told her husband to drop the issue of the ram's ear. This account shows that the wives of these ordained men were present when problems were processed; in this case, they were deeply involved in the incident.

Anna and Annie, Sallie and Caroline

Anna Overholt (1855-1909) married Abraham M. Hunsicker. They were members at Blooming Glen, but their home was on Fourth Street in the town of Perkasie. In 1908 Anna became seriously ill. During this time she became concerned about the children who played on the streets in front of her home, children who had no access to Sunday school. She told her husband to contact William M. Moyer from the Blooming Glen congregation to ask him to buy the vacant lot close to her home and build a church on the lot. On January 18, 1909, Moyer had a meeting and by January 30, 1909, the lot was purchased.

Sallie M. Alderfer and her husband, Preacher Elias Landis, from Salford. "I knew Sallie would make a good preacher's wife." Credit: Kass Landis

The building was quickly erected and first occupied for worship on August 8, 1909. But alas, Anna died on May 5, 1909, and never entered the building about which she had dreamed.

Annie C. Funk (1874-1912), a missionary in India from the Eastern District congregation at Hereford, wrote an insightful letter from India in 1908. In the letter she lamented her ability to understand the culture in which she served: "I'm sure we do many things here which the Hindu mind misunderstands because we do not understand them." Again in 1911, she writes with discernment, "to present the truths in such a way that they can grasp the idea is such a difficult matter, because their mode of thought is so different." Annie was a passenger on the ill-fated Titanic when it sank on April 15, 1912. She was returning to her home in Bally for her first furlough.

An interesting story concerns Sallie M. Alderfer (1899-1994), who was married to Preacher Elias Landis from Salford. In 1928 Enos Godshall placed Elias's name in the lot for preacher at Salford. Although there were three others in the lot and Elias was the last to pick one of the four books, the lot fell on him. Several months after he was ordained, someone in the congregation asked Enos Godshall why he had nominated Elias, commenting, "Why, he isn't a good speaker." Enos Godshall replied, "I knew Sallie would make a good preacher's wife."

She was Sallie M. Alderfer, and she was indeed a dedicated minister's wife. Elias died in 1957 when Sallie was 58 years old. She lived to be 94. During those 36 years, she continued her ministry, even though she had lost her role as preacher's wife. One Sunday morning, several years before she died, I found her in the large main foyer at Salford. This was unusual because she was almost always in the smaller front foyer. I commented to her that it was uncommon to find her in the main foyer. She spread her hands apart and said, "These are my people." She once talked about the time "we were ordained," very clearly understanding herself to be a part of that ordination with her husband.

Other women who were not minister's wives also filled nurturing roles. At Salford Caroline A. Alderfer (1915-1991) taught Sunday school and gave flannelgraph lessons for decades. Recently, her niece, Linda Alderfer Martin, asked everyone in the congregation who had been taught by Caroline to stand. A large proportion of the congregation arose. Linda said that each time one of Caroline's many nieces and nephews had a birthday, Caroline would telephone and sing her own version of "Happy

Birthday" with words that included, "Happy Birthday and Jesus loves you."

Missions: Keep the Place Clean

New opportunities for women who were single or who were married to unordained men opened up when the Franconia Mission Board was organized in 1917. The first Franconia Conference-sponsored mission started at Norristown, in 1919. All the superintendents who served from 1919 to 1936 were, of course, men. In Wenger's list of superintendents, Willis Kulp Lederach's term spans the years from 1921 to 1928.

During these years Willis (1896-1983) and his wife, Mary Heckler Mensch (1898-1980), lived at the mission home at 21 West Marshall Street. While Willis went to work at the Bridgeport National Bank, Mary met with and related to people who lived near the mission home. Prior to their marriage, Willis and Mary had been accepted by the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities as workers at a Chicago mission. In a letter dated May 10, 1921, S. E. Allgyer wrote to Mary, "I just want to inform you that your examination papers have passed through the hands of the committee and been returned to me, and are marked O K, Br. Willis the same. . . . I am wondering . . . when we can look for you in Chicago."

Mary and Willis were married on June 1, 1921. During the summer months, their plans changed when the Franconia Mission Board invited them to go to the mission in Norristown instead of going to Chicago. Several decades later, Mary reflected on their seven years of service at Norristown, "Living at the Mission from 1921 to 1928 was a blessed experience. My time was spent cooking and cleaning, entertaining and making contacts, visiting S. S. children's homes and shut-ins, with the unexpected happenings often challenging both one's know-how and endurance. Missions stations in the '20s served as free hotels for traveling Mennonites. One never knew who was coming, or when." In another essay, Mary wrote, "Washing the linens for overnight guests and preparing meals for travelers never ceased."

Mary Heckler Mensch in 1917 before her marriage to Willis Kulp Lederach. As a mission worker at Norristown, Mary cooked, cleaned, visited, entertained, made contacts, and occasionally "talked" when the visiting preacher failed to show up. Credit: Mary Jane Hershey

Mary taught in the Sunday school and filled in when visiting preachers from the surrounding country churches failed to appear for the worship service. Willis recorded this in his journal, noting the name of the expected, but absent, preacher and adding, "Mary talked."

Both Lederachs lamented their lack of wise counsel and preparation for the mission assignment. Mary wrote, "For the most part, the Mission Board could give very little helpful advice (about how a mission was to be conducted). . . . Some of them (the Mission Board members) evaluated you proportionately to your reliability in handling the money in the offering boxes and your ability to keep the place clean." On the same issue, Willis wrote, "No examination to take, not told what we were expected to do. I think one of the Mission Board members told us to take the offering out of the boxes."

Single women were intensely involved there as mission workers. After the Lederachs had children, Cora Landes came to help. Mary, writing in 1928, records, "Cora Landes is the worker here. The Mission Board pays her a sum each week for support, and we support ourselves." Many single women commuted from surrounding towns to be "workers" on Sundays. At Norristown Wenger lists Martha Moyer, Mamie Freed, Alice Keeler, Grace Souder, Frances Lerch, and Verda Moyer.

By 1935 the Mission Board had opened eight mission stations, providing many service opportunities for women. Interestingly the Gardenville Sunday school was started in 1920 because an aged Mennonite sister, Annie A. Kramer from Deep Run, gave $100 to start a Sunday school. And in 1939 Mary Henry Ziegler (1866-1944) donated a tract of land in Bucks County, adjoining her fruit farm in Montgomery County, to the rural Finland mission to build a meeting-house. Because of her gender, Mary did not speak at the dedication of the new building.

Early in this century, the Doylestown congregation pioneered the involvement of women in congregational activities and mission work. This seems to have been a congregation that promoted mission activity and affirmed and used women's gifts. Hettie Kulp (1874-1965) became interested in mission work in 1896 when John S. Coffman of Elkhart, Indiana, held evangelistic services in the Franconia Conference. After attending Elkhart Institute for two years and graduating with the class of 1900, she married Jacob D. Mininger from

Souderton. They met when both were teaching at the Philadelphia Mennonite Home Mission. After their marriage in 1904, Jacob immediately transferred his membership to the Doylestown congregation. They would later be mission workers in Kansas City Kansas.

A list in Wenger's book, remarkable because such a Franconia Conference record is unusual, lists women from Doylestown who had worked in mission activities: Catharine B. Kulp at the Los Angeles Mennonite Mission, Rebecca Histand Graybill at the Reading Mennonite Mission, Esther Histand at the Cottage City, (Maryland) Mennonite Mission, and Ruth Histand Moseman who sailed with her husband, John, to Tanganyika, Africa. In 1935 the Sunday school gave $127.18 toward the support of Sister Esther Vogt.

Among the Franconia Conference churches, Doylestown had the first sewing circle which began in 1908. Lydia M. Gross (1872-1938) and Mattie Detweiler learned of clothing needs and drove a team to the home of Preacher A. O. Histand and asked for permission to start sewing circle work. He was quite enthusiastic about this new venture and announced the first meeting to the congregation. Beginning in 1908 the Doylestown circle supplied clothing and bedding to Mennonite missions in India and South America, and to eastern Pennsylvania missions, the Eastern Mennonite Home, and the Christ Home at Warminster.

Looking through the lists of women who served with the churchwide Mennonite Women's Missionary Society, the only person recorded from the Franconia Conference was Lydia Gross from Doylestown. She was elected to a two-year term as district representative on August 30, 1917, at a meeting at Yellow Creek near Goshen, Indiana.

Lydia Gross was involved in the discussions beginning in 1915 concerning the Mennonite Women's Missionary Society request to become an auxiliary to the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities. The appeal was rejected. Lydia Gross reported in November 1917 that although sewing circles and raising money for mission purposes was acceptable, the Franconia Conference leaders preferred that all money be channeled through the conference. Lydia wrote, "They do not approve of women having a separate board." Later this Women's Missionary Society was dissolved, and all women's activities came under the name of "sewing circles."

Lydia Gross from Doylestown was the only person born and raised in the Franconia Conference who served on the churchwide women's organization until 1965 when another Doylestown woman, Marie Althouse Stoltzfus, was appointed. (Between 1917 and 1965 Lois Gunden Clemens served as Secretary of Literature. Lois, born in the midwest, lived in Indiana prior to her marriage to Ernest R. Clemens of the Plains congregation in Lansdale). Sadly, it seems that the native-born Franconia Conference women did not have the freedom or encouragement to be involved in churchwide activities.

Conclusion

These stories illustrate how, in the continuing story of the Franconia Conference, women were effective in directing their interests and gifts. The stories also speak to women's involvement in church and community life and in family systems. By recording and taking a fresh look at these stories, by reading between the lines, perhaps some shadows have been illuminated and some insights have been gained.

Mary Jane Hershey, Harleysville, Pa., was a founder of the Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania, and currently serves as president. She is also co-owner of Hershey Farm Agency, Inc. This article was first presented at The Experience of Mennonite Women Conference, October 20-22, 1994, Harleysville, Pa.

Sources:

"A Farmer Shelters Tramps for Forty Years," *The Pennsylvania-German,* Vol. X, No. 4; Henry S. Bower, *A Genealogical Record of the Descendants of Daniel Stauffer and Hans Bauer,* Harleysville, Pa., 1897; Strassburger, Ralph Beaver, *The Strassburger Family and Allied Families of Pennsylvania,* Gwynedd Vally, Pa., 1922; Keyser, Alan G., ed., *The Account Book of the Clemens Family of Lower Salford Township, Montgomery County, Pennyslvania. 1749-1857,* The Pennsylvania German Society, 1975; James Y. Heckler, *History of Lower Salford Township in Sketches, Commencing with a History of Harleysville,* Harleysville, Pa., 1888; Alderfer, Joel D., *Peace Be Unto This House: A History of the Salford Mennonite Congregation, 1717-1988*; MacMaster, Richard K., *Conscience in Crisis,* Scottdale, Pa., 1979; Munro, Joyce Clemmer, *Willing Inhabitants,* Souderton, Pa., 1981; Muhlenberg, Henry Melchior, *The Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg in Three Volumes,* Philadelphia, Pa., 1942; Funk, Christian, *A Mirror for All Mankind,* Norristown, Pa., 1814; Elaine Sommers Rich, *Mennonite Women: A Story of God's Faithfulness,* Scottdale, Pa., 1983.

Open Windows: English Quakers View European Mennonites

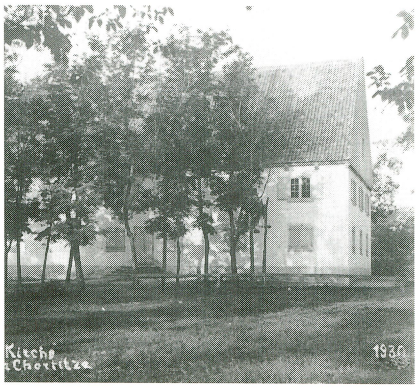
by Harold D. Lehman

The spiritual kinship of English Quakers with Mennonites on the European continent has a long and significant history. Shortly after the founding of Quakerism in the mid-17th century, Friends "traveling in the ministry" sought to make converts among Mennonites in Holland and Germany. Among two-score Quaker missioners to the Continent was William Ames. He wrote back to England in 1659 that he found the Mennonites "near to the kingdom" and "white unto harvest." With the decline of intense Quaker missionary zeal on the Continent by the end of the 17th century, their interests turned more to the shared peace witness and to the need for offering material aid to Mennonites forced to emigrate. An article in *The Friend* (London) in 1885 noted that "the early leaders of the Society of Friends took great interest in and support for the Mennonites of the Palatinate who had fled from the persecution of the Calvinists in Switzerland."

The William Allen and Stephen Grellet Window, 1819-1840

The first recorded Quaker contact with Russian Mennonites was by William Allen and Stephen Grellet in 1819. Allen, an English Quaker, was a noted chemist and philanthropist. Grellet, a Frenchman, emigrated to America where he was converted to the Friends and at age 24 was recorded as a traveling minister.

The journey of Allen and Grellet was primarily a religious one, but it gave an extraordinary opportunity for Allen to bring his testimony for peace and social reform before King Bernadotte in Sweden and Czar Alexander I in Russia. Emperor Alexander had become acquainted with Allen in 1814, and had once accompanied him to the Westminster Quaker meeting in London.



English Quaker William Allen observed of the 500 Mennonites meeting at Chortitza: "They are in the practice of silent prayer, both at the beginning and close of their worship." This photo of the Chortitza meetinghouse was taken in 1930. Credit: Archives of the Mennonite Church.

After the Quaker travelers left the capital city, St. Petersburg, they continued on a southerly route, visiting the Mennonite settlements of Chortitza and Molotschna in May 1819. In that district of South Russia, they were accompanied by the military superintendent, General Contineas, who acted as their translator.

On the 23rd of May, the traveling trio came first to the village of Neuenbourg, before moving on to the larger village of Chortitza. After a service there the next morning, the men were taken by boat to the Island of Chortitza in the Dneiper River. On the 25th they traveled over part of a vast steppe, arriving by evening at Graenenthal. During the remaining four days, May 26-29, the visitors came to the Molotschna settlements of Halbstadt and Petershagen, concluding with stays in Orloff and Altona. Following are some observations recorded by William Allen on this journey.

On their first impression of a Mennonite village: We arrived at Neuenbourg, the first colony of the Mennonists; 14 families, five hundred sheep and lambs, the land is excellent; they pay a few kopeks per acre to the Crown. They are like the Society of Friends, giving no salaries to their minister, and their bishop may be seen guiding his own plough, not at all distinguishable by his clothing from the rest of the brethren . . . On the "colony of Cortitz [sic]":

The first settlers came 30 years ago from Prussia, and consisted of 331 families but they are now increased to nearly six hundred. The houses are built of wood, very neatly thatched, and comfortable; they present a striking contrast, when compared with a Russian cottage, and are all furnished with a commodious barn and granary, and a garden, well stocked with fruit trees.

On the 9:00 a.m. meeting at Chortitza, May 24, attended by five hundred persons: There were some from most, if not all, the 15 villages. We found them singing a hymn. . . . The Bishop explained to them in German who we were, and the object of our journey, and then exhorted them to prayer; they all knelt down, and remained a short time without uttering a word. They are in the practice of silent prayer, both at the beginning and close of their worship.

On the visit to the pastor's home on the Island of Chortitza: The pious pastor came to meet us in a little cart; we were both struck with the sweetness and simplicity which

appeared in his countenance. After the first salutation, he set off at full speed to give notice to his wife of our coming; as we approached the avenue leading to the house, we found the path strewed with lilac blossoms, the rooms also were ornamented with flowers, and everything bore the marks of neatness and comfort. The mistress of the house is, apparently, a very clever woman; they have five or six children, some of them nearly grown-up. We were much delighted with this truly Christian family, with whom we had some religious communication. . . .

From a letter received by Allen and Grellet from Jacob Fast, Elder of the Congregation at Halbstadt:

"Dear friends and brethren in Christ, your honest-hearted visit to us, your edifying counsel, and your balsamic epistle, we gratefully accept as a proof of pure brotherly love. Our hearts have been thereby united to you. . . . You have left your homes for the sake of the word of God, and the salvation of souls, and have offered yourselves up to his guidance for Jesus' sake. We very earnestly desire that he may accompany your important work with his saving blessing. . . ."

When Allen returned to London, he immediately sent a selection of seeds and cuttings for the Mennonite villagers. The Quaker pair received a warm letter of appreciation from General Contineas, dated 16th November 1819. "The two weeks which I had the happiness of passing in your society, are a memorable epoch in my life." Thereafter, occasional letters were exchanged between the Quakers and Contineas until his death in 1830.

William Allen and Stephen Grellet, on a subsequent trip to Europe in 1832 visited Mennonites in Holland and Germany. Allen records in detail their visit to Maxweiler, a pioneer Mennonite village on the Danube in Bavaria. Allen returned once more to Maxweiler in 1840 where he was welcomed into the home of Johann Schmidt, wife, and eight children. Through an interpreter, Jacob Lechy, who had walked 22 miles to the service, Allen preached to an audience of nearly one hundred.

"Our suffering [Russian Mennonite] brethren seem to have a special claim on Friends, on the grounds of their holding many of the same religious views which we hold; especially the Christian testimony against war, for which they are now witnessing and suffering." English Friends provided aid to emigrating Russian Mennonites in the 1870s and again in the 1920s. In this photo emigrating Mennonites transfer from a Soviet train to a German train in 1929. Credit: MCC Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church

The Daniel Wheeler and Joseph Yeardly Windows, 1820-1853

Daniel Wheeler, a prosperous farmer and seed merchant, was a recorded Quaker minister. When Czar Alexander I asked for a Quaker agriculturist to oversee the draining and reclamation of the swamps around St. Petersburg, Wheeler answered the call and was accepted. He went to Russia in 1818 with his family and retinue of servants, including a teacher for his children. During his 14-year stay in Russia, he visited the Mennonite colonies to study their farming methods. Wheeler greatly admired their management of land and crops, but deplored the visible inferiority of their Russian peasant neighbors. He felt that the disparity "sinned against the light" because the Mennonites "hugged their prosperity without sharing it with their Russian neighbors."

In a letter written by Wheeler to David Mallison in February 1820, he was outspoken on the matter: Last summer I visited a large German colony. They have great privileges, live in good houses, are exempt from all taxes and from military service and the land does not cost them more than one shilling per acre. Dost thou think this likely to benefit the Russians? Wilt thou agree with me that it just serves to keep them where they are, in great degradation and hopeless servitude?

Joseph Yeardly, who visited the Molotschna villages of Halbstadt, Alexanderwohl, Gnadenfeld, and Steinbach in the summer of 1853, viewed differently the responsibility for the disparity between the life of the Russian peasant and the German colonist. "Although his German neighbor is in an infinitely better condition than himself, the Russian peasant will not imitate the husbandry which is practiced so successfully before his eyes."

The Isaac Robson and Thomas Harvey Window, 1867-1887

Isaac Robson, joined by Thomas Harvey, made a visit to Germany and Russia in 1867, always on a lookout for Mennonite communities. Robson was a tea dealer originally from Liverpool, and Harvey was a retired businessman from Leeds. On the 25th of August, they arrived at the Mennonite village of Neuburg in Bavaria where they met for worship at the home of Jacob Hege. A group of 20 "gathered around a large table with their hymn books before them and very quickly and seriously joined in singing. After this, one of the elders, a sturdy-looking farmer, preached we thought in a feeling manner. Immediately after this they all knelt down, whilst he read a long prayer." Then the Quakers were asked to speak. "We felt it our duty to stir them up to diligence and to the importance of letting their light be seen—touching also on the nature of true worship and on their practice of reading prayers." After the meeting the table was spread and a simple but bountiful meal was served for the whole company—a practice arising out of their circumstances of distance from each other.

On October 10, 1867, Robson and Harvey arrived in South Russia by way of steamer, landing at Berdiansk, a port town on the north shore of the Sea of Azov. Cornelius Janzen, who had been apprised of their coming, rescued them from an uncomfortable inn and took them to his home. Jansen, a Mennonite leader and the German consul for the area, was fluent in German and English. The travelers spent a few days at the Jansen home, attending two special services and a Sunday meeting. In his journal Robson mentioned that "the Mennonites made many inquiries regarding our principles and practices—particularly respecting baptism and the supper. These Mennonites are firm against war and in many respects are nearly one with Friends." Regarding the Sunday service, Robson wrote: "The house is fitted up much like a Friends' meeting—only the gallery where the preachers sit has a pulpit in the middle. Men and women sit separately as with us. During the service the congregation twice knelt down for silent prayer."

In succeeding days Robson and Harvey, accompanied by Jansen, visited a number of Molotschna villages, usually requesting a religious service. In appendices to their report to the Yearly Meeting, 1868, Robson and Harvey make note of "a new wind of doctrine regarding baptism in the river." They also sent a paper on the Quaker view of baptism and the Lord's Supper to Jacob Martens, pastor at Tiegenhagen, at his request.

"Quakers may be called the Mennonites of England."

Several years after the Quaker visit, the Russian government rescinded the military exemption originally promised by Catherine II. The Mennonites were given 10 years to comply, with the option of leaving the country. Mennonite delegations to St. Petersburg in 1871 and 1873 failed to move the government, so in 1873 the immigration to North America began. In the next year, it developed into a mass movement which eventually carried one-third of the Russian Mennonites to the prairies of Canada and United States.

Robson and Harvey were periodically appraised of this crisis in Russia through correspondence with Cornelius Janzen. Robson, in turn, kept Friends in England informed of the plight of the Mennonites through a pamphlet published in 1872, *The Mennonites in South Russia*, and through articles appearing periodically in *The Friend*. By January 1874, Jansen and family were in Canada and in the States negotiating the anticipated immigration into the New World. Robson and Harvey further responded by asking English Quakers to raise funds to help the emigrating Mennonites. The Friends' Meeting for Sufferings (April 1874) was not prepared to take a definite course of action. But at a subsequent meeting (February 1875) they agreed to send out an appeal to all constituent meetings in Britain and asked Robson and Harvey to draft the document.

The "Appeal on Behalf of the Emigrant Mennonite" outlined a brief history of the Mennonites and explained the present emergency. The object of the appeal was to raise money, not for the purpose of stimulating emigration, but to give relief to sick and destitute emigrants and to supply seed, implements, and cattle for those whose means had been exhausted.

The appeal closed with the words: "We think it can scarcely be needful to add that these our suffering brethren seem to have a special claim on Friends, on the grounds of their holding many of the same religious views which we hold; especially the Christian testimony against war, for which they are now witnessing and suffering." Attachments to the appeal quoted letters from the Jansens (then in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa), a description of the hardships of Mennonites in Dakota from the *Herald of Truth*, 1874, and a news item from the *Liverpool Daily Post*, February 2, 1875, regarding 328 Mennonite emigrants detained there because of an outbreak of smallpox in the group. Five deaths occurred while the men and women were quartered in separate workhouses in the city. Finally there was a list of 40 contributions already made to the Mennonite fund ranging from three shillings to 150 pounds.

From 1873 to 1887 *The Friend* periodically published short articles regarding the Mennonite exodus from Russia and how they were far-

ing in America. Such reports were written by Thomas Harvey, Cornelius Jansen, John F. Funk, editor of the *Herald of Truth*, plus a few letters of thanks by emigrant Isaac Peters and others. The total amount subscribed by British Quakers was 1865 pounds, 8 shillings, 1 pence. Of this amount over 620 pounds was not needed and was put at the disposal of the Meeting for Sufferings, who decided "to help coloured refugees from Southern States into Kansas." If a British subscriber objected, the money would be returned or put to another cause. *The Friend* reported in 1881 that no one claimed a dividend.

A note of local interest appeared in *The Friend* in 1885 in an article by Abraham Blosser of Dale Enterprise, Virginia. In describing early relationships between Quakers and Mennonites he wrote, "Quakers may be called the Mennonites of England."

The Woodbrooke College Window, 1903 Onward

Woodbrooke, a Quaker study centre, was established in 1903 to strengthen the religious life of the Society of Friends. It was the founding member of the Selly Oak Colleges at Birmingham, England. From its beginnings, Woodbrooke's educational program attracted an international student body, representing a variety of religious faiths. Early on, Woodbrooke enrolled numbers of Dutch students, due to the Dutch academic connections of its first head, J. Rendell Harris. By 1935, 194 people from the Netherlands had been to Woodbrooke.

Among the early attenders at Woodbrooke was T. O. Hylkema, who later became an influential pastor in the Dutch Mennonite Church. Hylkema was a student at Woodbrooke in the autumn term of 1909 and summer term of 1919. His life was profoundly influenced. He commented: "I came to Woodbrooke with my tennis racquet to have a good time and found Jesus Christ there."

"I came to Woodbrooke with my tennis racquet to have a good time and found Jesus Christ there." Dutch Mennonite T. O. Hylkema was profoundly influenced by Woodbrooke, a Quaker study center. Hylkema (on left) is pictured with H. S. Bender before 1952. Credit: Nelson E. Kauffman Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

In June 1911 Hylkema published a dissertation entitled "Woodbrooke en de Oud-Woodbrookers." He wrote that in 1908 several former students at Woodbrooke had founded a society, Woodbrookers in Holland. Their purpose was to keep alive their ties with each other and with Woodbrooke. Very soon the group began to talk about some kind of outreach. Accordingly in 1910 the first summer course was held at Lunteren. Two more followed in 1911 in Bennekom and two at Barchem in 1912. The purpose of the society was broadened "to enrich and strengthen religious life in the spirit of Woodbrooke." According to Hylkema the Old Woodbrookers sought to bridge a serious breech in the religious life of their country between the orthodox and the modern. The Old Woodbrookers were also interested in providing their own Dutch Woodbrooke facilities. This dream came to realization with the gift from Baroness von Heeckeren von Kell of a parcel of land near Barchem. The site was remote, surrounded by extensive pine and birch forests. A lecture hall already stood on a high elevation and there were plans for a main building to house 60 visitors. Barchem was to be "a place of retreat and of study, at the same time a place where people can go to be inwardly strengthened and enriched, and where people can prepare their spirits and minds for the service of God and of their neighbor."

The influence of the Woodbrooke-and-Barchem-type conferences and summer schools continued under T. O. Hylkema's leadership. In 1917 at a conference at Barchem, he called a meeting of the Mennonites present, out of which developed the Church-Day Conference of Mennonites. It was the intense desire of these leaders to revitalize the religious life of the total membership. Mennonites in Holland began to remember their own forgotten principle of biblical nonresistance. Silent prayer, Bible study, and missions came to the fore. The Mennonite Youth Union was founded. Five retreat centers, called originally Mennonite Brotherhood Houses, were established. One of these, Elspeet, provided a range of facilities for retreats and conferences, camping and recreation.

T. O. Hylkema, then pastor of Giethoorn Mennonite Church, remained active in associations with English Quakers. On February 4, 1921, as an official delegate to the Meeting for Sufferings, he spoke on behalf of the Mennonites in South Russia and their efforts to emigrate to United States, Canada, and Paraguay. He also requested that the London Yearly Meeting send one or two delegates to the annual Mennonite conference convening at Lunteren, June 13-17 of that year. Two Quakers were appointed to attend and "carry the loving greetings of Friends to the Brethren of the Mennonite Church and the hope

that this visit will strengthen the fellowship binding all followers of Jesus Christ."

In 1922 T. O. Hylkema, Jan Gleijsteen, Sr., Fritz Kuiper, and others founded the Workgroup of Mennonites and Quakers Against War and Military Conscription (renamed Mennonite Peace Group in 1946) to reintroduce the almost forgotten principles of biblical nonresistance into the respective groups.

In August 1927 Hylkema, with American Mennonite H. P. Krehbiel of Kansas, visited England to call for closer contacts between churches taking the pacifist position. Their proposals were referred to the Meeting for Sufferings which decided to follow a more guarded approach. "The formation of any large international board had better follow than precede closer contact." That was the end of the matter as far as English Quakers were concerned, although the historic peace churches in America did achieve a degree of cooperation.

The Quaker-Mennonite Window Between World Wars I and II

While English Quakers historically were ready to cooperate in ventures with Mennonites on the Continent, they were hesitant to make alliances on their own turf. In 1918 English Friends serving in relief work in France, who had been accorded the status of an Allowed Monthly Meeting, were interested in extending their fellowship. On May 2nd, 1919, this group passed the following minute: The earnest desire of Friends now working in the Mission in France is that the spirit of fellowship and service which they have come to share, may find a wider and more permanent expression . . . with service and similar committees amongst the different branches of Friends and in the Mennonite churches and other bodies who may wish to unite in helping us interpret the living message of the Spirit of Christ through free and loving service.

The minute was too late to get on the agenda of Yearly Meeting on the 21st of May, 1919.

In July, three hundred unit members including Mennonite representatives met at Jordans, a Friends Centre in England, and came up with a similar proposal. Jordans Conference had no executive power. The proposal was sent on to the Friends World Conference, but discussions never took place. After the close of World War I, the French relief units were disbanded and the French Allowed Monthly Meeting was "laid down."

The English Friends did respond to calls for help for Mennonites emigrating from Russia in 1924 and 1930. In 1924 a few Mennonites who were detained in Southampton because of illness were visited by Quaker Katherine Balls, who provided them with clothing and money and reported to the Dutch Mennonite Committee on their welfare.

From 1935 to 1938, British Quaker Corder Catchpool was involved in relief efforts for hungry children in the Sudetenland, a region disputed between Czechoslovakia and Germany. Catchpool was a conscientious objector in World War I, a pioneer member of the Friends Ambulance Unit, and by the '30s was connected with the Friends Berlin Centre.

In Germany there was a relief organization, Bruder im Not (Brothers in Need), originally founded by German Mennonites to assist their co-religionists in Russia during the Revolution. But because of political reluctance by the Czech government to allow German aid to be given to German minorities in their territory, Catchpool saw the opportunity to intervene as a neutral relief agency. In the interests of Quaker relief, he was permitted to use funds from Bruder im Not to provide food in the disputed area for both German and Czech children. Over two winters he supervised the distribution of food, visiting 70 food centers in the area. Before Czechoslovakia was overrun by the Nazis in 1938, Corder Catchpool had been decorated by Jan Masaryk with the Czech Order of the White Lion.

The kinship between English Quakers and European Mennonites continues today. In June 1991 the first of three gatherings of the Friends Fifth World Conference met at Elspeet Mennonite Center in the Netherlands. In recent years fraternal delegates exchange visits between London Yearly Meeting and the Dutch Mennonite Conference.

The windows opened by English Quaker travelers during the 19th century provided a unique view on Mennonite life in Europe. The Quakers reflected interests and values similar to the Mennonites, as well as a few differences.

Historically there had been the early efforts to proselytize Mennonites, notably in Holland. The Quaker travelers expressed a glowing appreciation for the hospitable reception they received in Mennonite homes and worship services. Of special interest to 19th-century Friends were the major successes of agricultural life among the Mennonites transplanted into South Russia.

The nonresistant testimony of the Mennonites was shared by the Quakers. When exemption from military service was withdrawn from the Mennonites, the Friends supported their immigration to North America. The Quaker window revealed differences in styles of worship, symbols associated with religious expression, and patterns of leadership. Concern was expressed for the Mennonite colonists' apparent lack of interest in the welfare of their peasant neighbors.

How did the Mennonites respond to this Quaker connection? There was evident appreciation for the social contact, spiritual testimony, and material aid offered by the

Friends. They were curious about Quaker religious views, especially on the sacraments. Mennonites respected the Quakers' leadership in peace witness to civil authorities and acknowledged their expertise in relief efforts.

Although the English Quaker-European Mennonite kinship was an expression of mutual appreciation, it is apparent that each group maintained its distinctive piety and religious practices. In the long view of history, Quakers were not able to maintain a flourishing membership on the Continent, nor did the Mennonites establish a significant foothold in Britain.

Harold Lehman, now retired from teaching at EMU, spent several years recently at Woodbrooke, Birmingham, England.

Sources:

Hull, William I., *Children of Light,* The Macmillan Company, 1938; *The Friend*, 1885, 1830, 1887, 1919, 1921, 1932; *Life of William Allen with Selections from His Correspondence,* Volumes II and III, London: Charles Gilpin, 1846 and 1847; Letter, Daniel Wheeler to David Mallison, Friends House, London; Robson, Isaac and Harvey, Thomas, *The Mennonites of South Russia,* Birmingham, 1872, unpublished ms., Friends House, London; *Yearly Meeting, 1868, Narrative of the Visit of Isaac Robson and Thomas Harvey to the South of Russia,* unpublished ms., Friends House, London; *Minutes of Meetings for Sufferings,* May 11, 1875, "Sufferings of the Mennonites," Vol. 229, Friends House, London; Davis, Robert, *Woodbrooke: 1903-1953,* London: The Barnsdale Press, 1953; Hylkema, T. O.. *Woodbrooke in de Oud-Woodbrookers,* Steenwijk, 1911, reprinted 1913. Translated by Marijke Kyler; *Mennonite Weekly Review*, "The Peaceful Dutch Warrior Goes Home," May 18, 1989; Greenwood, John Ormerod, *Quaker Encounters: Friends and Relief,* Vol. 1. York: Wm. Sessions, 1975, *Quaker Encounters: Vines on the Mountains,* Vol. 2, 1977, *and Quaker Encounters: Whispers of Truth,* Vol. 3, 1978.

News and Notes

Historical Committee activities at Wichita `95 included the following:

- A presentation by James Juhnke on the life of Ed G. Kaufman (1891-1980), General Conference Mennonite missionary, churchman, and Bethel College president.
- A display featuring the 75th anniversary of MCC, which focused on relief efforts in Europe after WW I, CPS in the United States, and relief and service efforts in Europe and beyond after WW II.
- A report to General Assembly delegates.
- The election of two new members to the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church: Marcus Miller, Wellman, Iowa, and Nate Yoder, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

New officers of the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church selected at the spring meeting in Oregon are: Arlin Lapp, Harleysville, Pennsylvania, chair; Carolyn Charles, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, vice chair; and Hope Lind, Eugene, Oregon, secretary.

The Menno Simons Historical Library at EMU has announced the first recipient of the Harry A. Brunk Scholars Award. **Susan Fisher Miller** of Evanston, Ill., was selected to receive the first $2,000 award to help fund her biographical paper on 19th-century Mennonite evangelist John S. Coffman (1848-1899). Miller graduated from Goshen College and earned a Ph.D. in English from Northwestern University. She is the author of *Culture for Service: A History of Goshen College,* published in 1994 for the school's centennial. Miller presented her paper on September 29, 1995, in a session of a conference on Pietist groups, jointly sponsored by Bridgewater College and EMU.

Applications are invited for **The Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund.**The administrative committee annually distributes approximately $2,500 to support projects dealing with history, peacemaking (particularly in the Middle East), Mennonite ecumenicity, and the Christian faith. Applications forms are available from The Administrative Committee, Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

Belleville Mennonite School, Belleville, Pennsylvania, celebrated its 50th anniversary, June 16-18, 1995. John Sharp, a 1969 graduate, gave a keynote address. His presentation, "Forward Through the Ages," focused on memory, identity, and vision.

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ontario, celebrated its 50th anniversary, September 29-October 1, 1995. Highlights included performances of Haydn's *Creation,* an address by Ruth Boehm, and the introduction of *Lead Us On,* a history of Rockyway by **Sam Steiner.** Steiner recently completed eight years as a member of the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church.

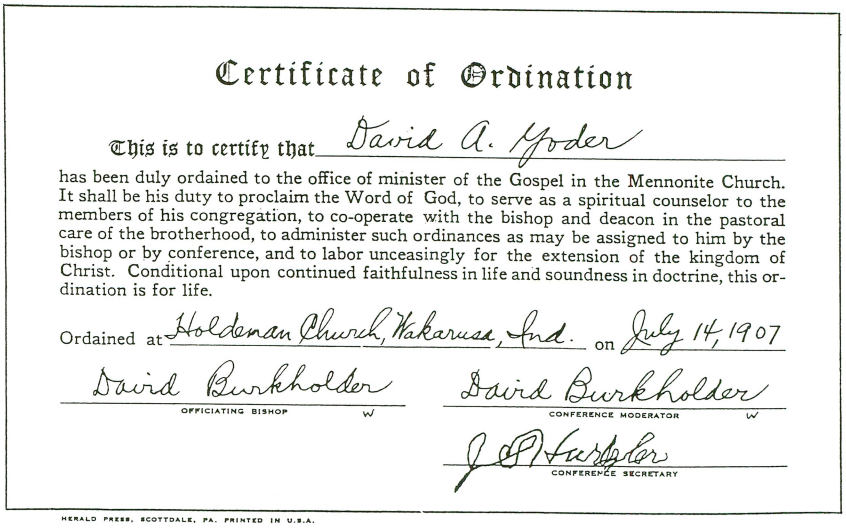
Michel Paret, Chatenay-Malabry, France, was at the archives for a week recently, researching the development of Diakonia (service and social action) in Mennonite circles in France. Paret was interested in the relief and reconstruction done by Mennonites in France after the World Wars. Paret was particularly interested in the interaction between the Mennonites from the U.S. and France, and the effects that this had on French Mennonites. Paret is director of public relations for Amities, a facility serving mentally handicapped children and adults; this program was begun in the 1940s and 1950s through the support of Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Board of Missions. Paret has published some of his findings in *Christ Seul* (Number 5, 1995), p. 13-15, and in Les Cahiers de "Christ Seul" (Number 4, 1994).

The Archives Scrapbook Page

by John Sharp

Two boxes of materials, including photo albums, memorabilia, and personal papers were added recently to the D. A. and Frances (Ferguson) Yoder Collection. Presented here is a sampling of the materials donated by Lois Yoder Weaver.

David Abraham Yoder was born on October 14, 1883 near Nappanee, Indiana. He was baptized by John F. Funk in 1896 at the Holdeman meetinghouse, Wakarusa, Indiana.



Certificate of Ordination

This is to certify that David A. Yoder

has been duly ordained to the office of minister of the Gospel in the Mennonite Church. It shall be his duty to proclaim the Word of God, to serve as a spiritual counselor to the members of his congregation, to co-operate with the bishop and deacon in the pastoral care of the brotherhood, to administer such ordinances as may be assigned to him by the bishop or by conference, and to labor unceasingly for the extension of the kingdom of Christ. Conditional upon continued faithfulness in life and soundness in doctrine, this ordination is for life.

Ordained at Holdeman Church, Wakarusa, Ind. on July 14, 1907

David Burkholder — OFFICIATING BISHOP

David Burkholder — CONFERENCE MODERATOR

J. D. Hartzler — CONFERENCE SECRETARY

HERALD PRESS, SCOTTDALE, PA. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

Ordination Certificate—D. A. was a schoolteacher and intent on becoming a medical doctor, but his career plans were abruptly altered when he was chosen by lot and ordained to Christian ministry at Holdeman Church on July 14, 1907. Several months later, he was called to serve the Shaum (Olive) congregation, southwest of Elkhart, Indiana, as pastor. He later said, "I was told Olive had 50 members, but I had to go out and find them." He served for 42 years as pastor of the congregation.

In 1910, at 26 years of age, he was ordained bishop at the Yellow Creek meetinghouse by David Burkholder. He served at least 11 congregations in Indiana-Michigan Conference as bishop, including 39 years in his home congregation of Olive. D. A. was also a member of the Indiana-Michigan Conference Executive Committee, moderator of the conference and of the Mennonite Church General Assembly.

Left: During his retirement years, D. A. enjoyed working with wood in his shop. He died in January 1980.

Right: He began his professional life as a public schoolteacher, and then turned to farming. His interest in education continued. He served 40 years as a member of the Mennonite Board of Education, 20 years as chairman. After his years of active service, he was appointed a lifetime member of the board. He is pictured here at the 78th Goshen College commencement, April 11, 1976.

Recent Publications

Donnell, Marilyn, *The Freed Clan: History and Genealogy*. Lexington, IL: Published by author, 1992. Pp. 116. Order from author: RR 1, Box 110, Lexington, IL 61753.

Friesen, C.T., *Johann "Hans" Ediger, 1775-1994*. Houston, TX: Published by author, 1994. Pp. 746. Order from author: PO Box 262304, Houston, TX 77207-2304.

Hamm, Gerhard and Bernhard, *Eine Familie mit uber 700 Kindern*. Grosswallstadt, Germany: Bibel-Mission, 1993. Pp. 218. Order from author: Gerhard Hamm, Lessingstr. 11, 53913 Swisttal-Heimerzheim, Germany.

Heckman, Loucile, compiler, *The Jacob Snyder Family History*. Prescott, AZ: Published by author, 1991. Pp. 360. $20. Order from author: 180 Apollo Heights Dr., Prescott, AZ 86301.

Keagy, Dale Robert, *Keagy Family History: Hans Kagi to Charles M. Keagy, 1695-1941*. York, PA: Published by author, 1993. Order from author: 1741 Lakeview Ln., York, PA 17402.

Mast, Mary, *Family History of Daniel J. Stutzman and Mary (Bontrager) Stutzman, 1851-1993*. Hutchinson, KS: Published by author, 1994. Pp. 172. $8. Order from author: 5201 S. Mohawk Rd., Hutchinson, KS 67501.

Puckett, Pearl Anna Grieser, *The History of Benjamin Grieser and Anna Oswald Grieser (with Grieser Updates, 1985-1992)*. West Point, NE: Published by author, 1982. Pp. 307. Order from author: 806 E. Walnut St., West Point, NE 68788.

Reimer, Marlene, compiler, *Unger Family Tree: Peter Unger (1855-1936) and Helene (Nikkel) Unger (1857-1954)*. Boissevain, MB: Published by author. Order from author: Box 1088, Boissevain, MB R0K 0E0.

Savage, Mary Irene, *John Christian Schlegel of Berks County, Pennsylvania and Descendants*. Baltimore, MD: Gateway Press, 1991. Pp. 406. $55. Order from author: 5620 Roseridge Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89107-1512.

Snyder, Ann, *Adam and Lydia Springer Amstutz: Their Descendants and Ancestors*. Columbus, OH: Published by the author, 1994. Order from author: 4143 Nottinghill Gate Rd., Columbus, OH 43220.

Strahl, Gary, *A Canadian Story: The Bill & Martha Strahl Family*. Chilliwack, BC: Don Dearborn, 1994. Pp. 385. $50. Order from author: 6193 Parsons Rd., Chilliwack, BC V4Z 1A4.

Troyer, Carl. W., *The Mueller-Menkel Family Genealogy*. Dallas, TX: Published by the author, 1994. Pp. 127. $25. Order from author: 3623 Pebble Beach Dr., Dallas, TX 75243-2545.

Wampler, Roy H., *John and Ludwig Wampler, Sons of the Immigrant Christian Wampler, with notes on William Wampler*. Chevy Chase, MD: Published by the author, 1988. Pp. 39. $5. Order from author: 4620 N. Park, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

Yankey, Lewis H., compiler, *The Hottinger and Yankey Families*. Winchester, VA: Published by author, 1991. Pp. 364. Order from: Patricia T. Ritchie, 1559 Moffett Dr., Winchester, VA 22601.

Yoder, Mrs. Andy L., *Descendants of John C. Miller, 1860-1913 and Sarah Ann Hostetler, 1864-1891*. Middlefield, OH. Pp. 95. Order from: Andy L. Yoder, 9356 Bundysburg Rd., Middlefield, OH 44062.

Yoder, Elizabeth and Rachel D. Wengerd, compilers, *Family Record of Kore E. Peachey and Rachel Hostetler Peachey & Their Descendants, 1877-1992*. Pp. 100. Order from: Dan M. Wengerd, RR 1, Box 231, Thompsontown, PA 17094.

Further information on these books may be obtained from the Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.

Mennonite Historical Bulletin
Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church
1700 South Main Street
Goshen, IN 46526
Telephone 219 535-7477
Forward and Address Correction Requested

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Scottdale, Pa
Permit No. 3